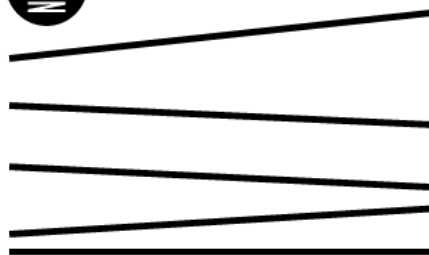


# Digitaliseret af | Digitised by



**DET KGL.  
BIBLIOTEK**

Royal Danish Library

Forfatter(e) | Author(s):

Titel | Title:

Macdonald, James.

Travels through Denmark and part of Sweden during the winter and spring of the year 1809 : Containing authentic particulars of the domestic condition of those countries, the opinions of the inhabitants, and the state of agriculture.

Udgivet år og sted | Publication time and place: London : Richard Phillips, 1810

Fysiske størrelse | Physical extent:

88 s.

## DK

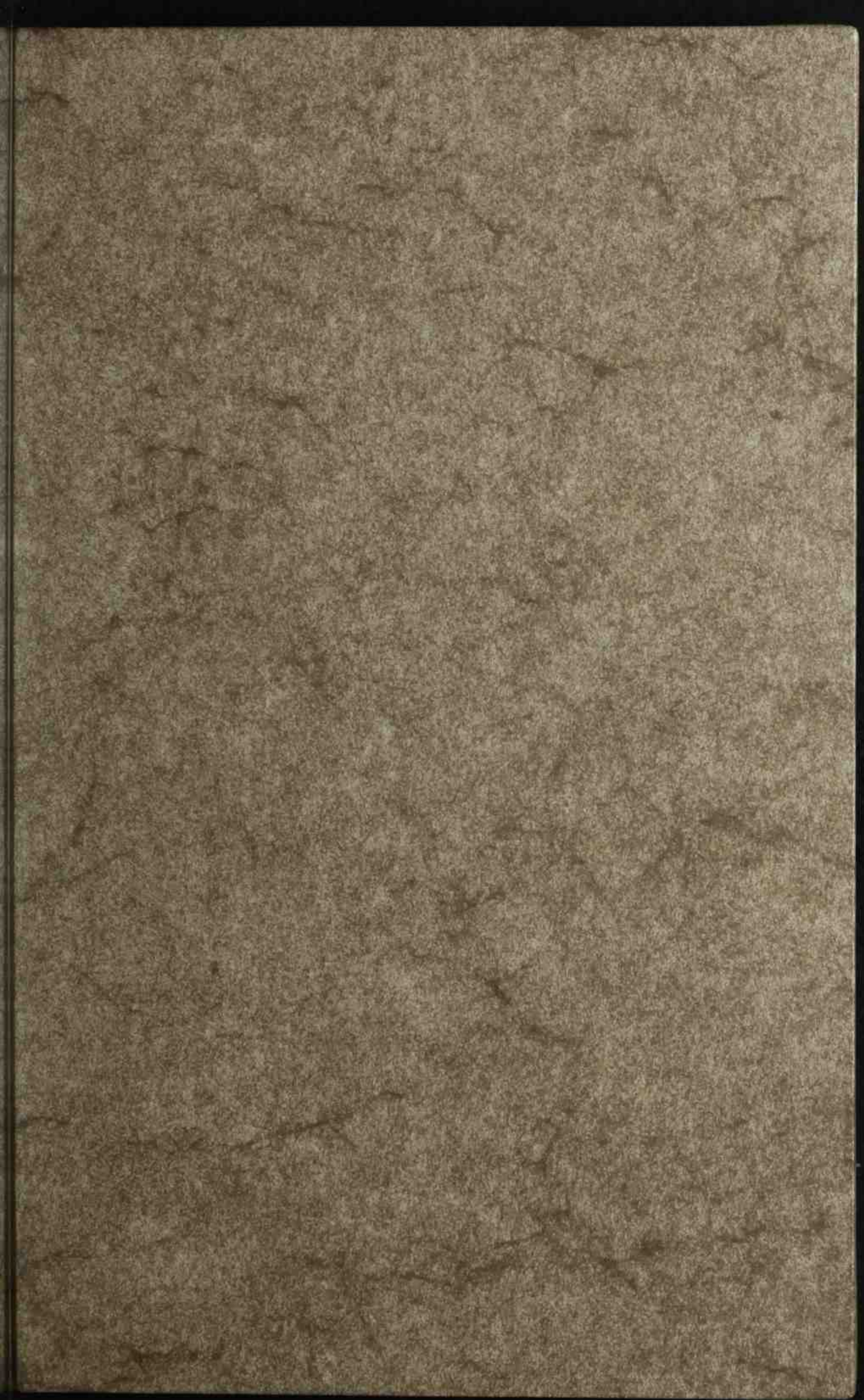
Materialet er fri af ophavsret. Du kan kopiere, ændre, distribuere eller fremføre værket, også til kommercielle formål, uden at bede om tilladelse. Husk altid at kreditere ophavsmanden.

## UK

The work is free of copyright. You can copy, change, distribute or present the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking for permission. Always remember to credit the author.





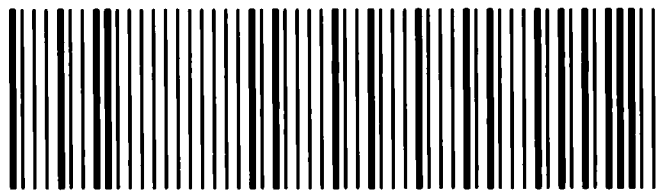




31, - 196, - 80



DET KONGELIGE BIBLIOTEK



130014244515





**TRAVELS**  
**THROUGH**  
**DENMARK,**  
**AND PART OF**  
**SWEDEN,**

**DURING THE WINTER AND SPRING OF THE YEAR**  
**1809:**

**CONTAINING**  
**AUTHENTIC PARTICULARS OF THE DOMESTIC CONDITION**  
**OF THOSE COUNTRIES, THE OPINIONS OF THE INHA-**  
**BITANTS, AND THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE.**

---

**BY JAMES MACDONALD.**

---

**LONDON:**  
**PRINTED FOR RICHARD PHILLIPS,**  
**BRIDGE STREET, BLACKFRIARS,**  
**BY B. McMILLAN, BOW STREET, COVENT GARDEN.**

**1810.**

2283





1978 K

## ADVERTISEMENT.

---

IN a letter to the Publisher, the Author of the following pages informs him, that his desultory Journal was written during a tour in the Spring of 1809, through some Danish and Swedish Provinces; and he cannot but think, that its perusal may draw the attention of our countrymen from the temporary subjects of the moment, to such matters as are connected with the permanent interests of the British Empire.

He observes, that he has not only committed to paper his own opinions, but also, those of persons with whom he conversed in the above-mentioned countries; “and I have done this,” he adds, “with frankness and impartiality; and with the feelings of a man who, in the hour of misfortune, experienced equally from the enemies and the allies of his country, the humanity of Christians and the kindness of friends; and who, after five different journies through various parts of the continent of Europe, has here written, without the assistance of a single paper, or a single book, the observations made on the spot, upon what he saw and felt during a period peculiarly eventful to the kingdoms to which his Journal refers.

“If my opinions concerning Zeeland should appear extravagant to any one not accustomed to reflect upon the present situation of the Northern Powers, I have only to assure him I am by no means singular in my opinions; but, on the contrary, coincide in every point with the most intelligent British and foreign gentlemen with whom I have lately had the pleasure of conversing.

“I have to add, as another motive for publishing what



to many readers may appear uninteresting, that the treatment experienced from the Danes by myself, and my fellow-sufferers, as well as by the survivors of the crew of his Majesty's late ship the *Crescent*, imposes it upon me as a duty to give all possible publicity to circumstances so honourable to that nation, and which may eventually soften the spirit of mutual hostility, which at present subsists between the two countries, and procure for the Danish prisoners in Britain as kind a treatment as the circumstances of the times permit.

“ I should ill deserve the liberty which their generosity so readily granted me, did I not seize the earliest opportunity of thanking the Danish monarch and nation for their kindness towards me, and that too in the way worthy of both, namely, in the plain language of sincerity and truth.”

The Editor has taken the liberty of altering the monotony of the Author's Journal, by dividing his communications into the more appropriate and agreeable form of Letters; but preserving the dates as he had placed them, and occasionally omitting a few irrelevant passages.

# TOUR

## THROUGH

### DENMARK AND SWEDEN.

---

#### LETTER I.

*Skagen or Scaw, a Village in North Jutland,  
November 24, 1808.*

**C**ONFINED here in a Danish prison, I have abundance of time to commit to writing what I can remember of the last four most unfortunate days of my life. For two days past I have been in a sort of fever, and scarcely able to arrange my ideas, but to-day I am better, and think I can recollect the most essential particulars of my misfortune.

At two in the morning of Sunday the 20th, the man at the helm cried out that he saw a light, and could plainly distinguish land. We all ran in our shirts to ascertain the fact, and, notwithstanding the coldness of the wind, did not dress ourselves for some time, till the whole crew unanimously declared they could see the light, and also the hull of the British ship (the Fury bomb), that carried it at her mizen top. I could not perceive any thing like a ship myself, but seeing the light very distinctly, I intreated captain Hutton to beware of the false lights, kindled by the natives of Jutland, as a decoy for English and Swedish vessels. He once more gratified me by going on deck, and even up the shrouds, to be convinced that the light belonged to the Fury man of war. The wind was south-east, and he called to the man at the helm, "John, steer close to the stern of the man of war, for I am certain I see her very masts; and she is described in the letter from my owners, received the morning we sailed, as lying six miles off the Scaw reef." Still I could discern no ship, though I can see objects at a great distance; and insisted on appealing once more to the crew.

The night was extremely cold, and they had once more unanimously declared their former opinion, somewhat peevishly, on account of my incredulity, when the ship struck



with a dreadful crash, and, as I thought, carried all her masts by the board. In this, however, I was mistaken. We tried every means to get her off, but in vain. Every wave now dashed her furiously against the bottom, and in five minutes (it was past three in the morning) the cabin was filled with water, and all the pumps choaked. A scene of horrible confusion followed. We heard reports from the shore, which we imagined to be the sound of artillery, but we afterwards learned they were only rifle-guns, fired to assure us that every attempt should be made to save our lives.

I recommended calmness and resignation to the crew, who every moment expected that the ship would go to pieces, and that all hands must perish. A German boy began to cry, and lament his fate; but when I told him I would throw him, or any other person overboard, from whom a single complaint should escape, he became more collected. Soon afterwards, however, he roared out that all was over, and begged me to shoot him through the head, rather than insist on his silence. I smiled at this silly request, and called all hands together to hear a short prayer, as they could now do no more than quietly await the dawn of day, in case the wreck should hold out so long.

The effect produced by the performance of this religious duty was truly astonishing. They recovered their spirits, and even had the presence of mind to dress themselves in their best clothes (a most fortunate circumstance for them), and to conceal what little money they had, as they expected to be plundered the moment their Danish enemies could approach the ship's sides.

Meanwhile the vessel providentially swung, probably on the wreck of a ship formerly sunk there, so that her stern turned towards the shore, and her bow towards the breakers. Captain Hutton lost his recollection a good deal, and was much confused, but he did every thing I requested. I never was more collected in my life; and had a strong presentiment during the whole night, that we should be saved in the morning. At four, one of the crew declared he saw day-light: in this I acquiesced; although I knew there could be no light till half past seven, or eight. The same man soon afterwards said that he saw a privateer moored to the leeward, and ready to take us in the morning. This would have been good news had it been true, but unfortunately it was not so. We passed three hours more in dreadful suspense, the wind occasionally rising and falling, blowing bitterly cold from the south-east, and the ship threatening

every instant to go to pieces. Every wave made a fair breach over us, and the masts, our sole remaining hope, groaned at every swing of the vessel.

Day-break at last appeared, and was succeeded by the only clear morning we had seen for several days. The shore was now covered with natives, and some dragoons were seen riding from place to place, accompanied by some infantry, and a piece of artillery.

It turned out to be the Scaw light which we had mistaken for that of the Fury man of war, and which had proved our ruin. We were within half a mile of the shore, amidst horrible breakers, a furious current, sand-banks, and the remains of wrecked vessels. We hoisted a flag of distress, although we were certain the people on shore dared not venture to approach us. After some time, however, they launched a stout boat, but were forced to make the shore again as speedily as possible. In this state we remained, almost perishing with cold, hunger, and thirst, till four in the afternoon, nearly sunset. I forgot to mention that our cabin had filled so fast, that we saved neither bread, wine, nor any provisions, that were not spoiled by the salt water; and to render our condition still more deplorable, our water-casks on deck were staved, so that we had nothing whatever to support us. Three bottles of porter were accidentally found on deck, and these we divided among our ten people.

At four, the sun having set, and the wind considerably abated, a boat manned with nine sturdy seamen came, in spite of wind and tide, within fifty yards of the ship, and then filled with water, which the crew instantly baled out with three casks, and again returned to their place. Our people were so benumbed with cold, that they could not throw an oar to any distance. I had most fortunately been accustomed to athletic exercises, and, after three trials, succeeded in throwing one with a rope fixed to it, as far as the boat. By this rope three of our crew were conveyed to the boat. The last man so sent was taken up in a lifeless condition by the Danish boatmen, but was soon restored to his senses: one of them now cried to me in German, that they could not save any more at present, but would return, if possible, in the morning. It was now growing dark; the cold and the wind increased, and the waves began to rise higher around the ship; the sky became overcast; and every thing seemed to portend a dreadful storm, and to annihilate all our remaining hopes of assistance from the shore.



I once more imposed silence on the crew, and summoned them to join in prayer, for I now really believed all was lost, and that, should the ship hold out, which was very improbable, we must nevertheless perish before day-break of cold, hunger, thirst and fatigue. We had already passed thirteen hours in this terrible situation. At the expression in my prayer, "Thine arm is not shortened that thou canst not save, for thou canst stay the fury of the storm, and say to the sea, Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther:" the whole crew uttered an ejaculation of blessing on me, which seemed to breathe some kind of hope. After prayer, I directed them to separate, desiring some to go into the fore-top, and others into the main-top: with the captain, his son, and a boy, I climbed into the main-top, and three others got with difficulty into the fore-top. The sea made a breach over me as I was getting into the shrouds, and knocked me down, carrying off my shoes and stick; in a moment afterwards I lost my hat, but was not much hurt by my fall. In the tops we remained the whole of the night, and kept one another awake at my particular request, by pinching every one who seemed inclined to fall asleep. This was an arduous task. We at last became indifferent, and rather wished the masts would go, and end us and our misery together. One of the men wanted to throw himself into the sea, and trust to being washed ashore; but I demonstrated to him the sin and folly of committing suicide, on which he desisted from the rash design. On my observing to captain Hutton that we should soon see the sun rise, the poor man replied, "Oh Sir, the morning sun will rise, but not to us." In answer to this I assured him that I did not despair of being saved before day-light, for the wind was sensibly abating. "God Almighty bless you," said he, "you never lose hope!" He soon fell into a state of insensibility, from which no exertions could rouse him; but, although I believed there was no chance of saving him, I and his son rubbed his hands, knees, and forehead, to prevent, if possible, his being frozen to death.

His son, poor fellow, only nineteen years of age, stripped off his great coat, and put it round his father's shoulders and neck, saying, "Dear father, remember you have a wife and seven small children at home: Oh don't give up hope, but support yourself for their sakes and mine!"

The boy on my left was now cold and breathless. I took him in my arms, to place him in the warmest place next the captain; and in so doing struck my right leg and arm vio-

lently against the topmast. We were in this state till half past six on the morning of Monday, when our old friends, who had saved the three men the preceding day, appeared at the distance of eighty or ninety yards from us, and called to us to throw them an oar as before. I answered that none of us could lay hold of any thing except myself, and that even I could not save any of the crew, unless the boat came alongside, which was by this time practicable. The noble fellows instantly rowed amidst a very dangerous swell alongside, and with much difficulty removed us all into their boat, which was nearly staved when we were all in. At length we got clear away from the ship, and made for the shore. The steersman felt my cheeks, hands, and feet, and instantly took off his hat, gloves, and jacket, into the sleeves of which he thrust my feet; his hat he put on my head, and with one of his gloves, which were of fur, and not divided into fingers, he covered both my hands.

It took us an hour to reach the village, as we were obliged to row round about, to keep clear of the breakers. It froze hard, and blew from the eastward. I could not conceive how the man who clothed me in his own dress could endure the extreme cold of the morning. He insisted on my wearing them, and continually rubbed my face and hands until I found that my blood circulated again; while his companions did the like for the rest of the sufferers. On our arrival we were conducted to an inn, under a guard of eight soldiers and a corporal.

On reaching the inn, our deliverers seemed happy in the service they had rendered us, but neither asked for money nor any thing else. We refreshed ourselves with coffee, bread, eggs, &c. and retired about nine: we occupied all the beds in the house, and the landlord with great humanity gave up his bed, lying on the floor himself, for our accommodation. We were here indeed treated with the greatest kindness. I could not sleep. At eleven I got up, although excessively fatigued, and for the first time felt much dejected; a strange contrast to the state of my companions, who were now in high spirits, after having been for the three preceding days reduced to the brink of despair. From this state of stoical apathy and indifference, I recollect to have been roused at one in the afternoon, by the arrival of the chief magistrate of the place, who came to see us, and to provide us with necessaries. I had the recollection, though his looks were by no means prepossessing, to request him to send the boat again to the ship, to try to recover

some of our clothes, which were left in the highest part of the ship's deck, fastened to the companion; he complied. We conversed in German, but he spoke it so badly, that I soon grew tired of him. He seemed more anxious to know the nature of the cargo, than whether or not we were all saved, and likely to live. The three men we had sent off the preceding day at four in the afternoon, were still fast asleep in the same inn, and promised to do well.

During the remainder of the 21st, till seven at night, I recollect scarcely any thing that happened, except that I dismissed some soldiers from my room, and requested to see their captain who commanded the military in this village. He came, and in the sequel proved a real friend. He is a man of education, speaks good German, and appears humane and obliging. My first conversation was short and desultory. I begged him to call next morning, and in the mean time to remove the guard of twelve men from the house, as they made so much noise, that I was unable to obtain any rest, from the want of which I was suffering very severely. He informed me that it was not in his power to comply with my request, but ordered the soldiers to retire from the chamber in which I slept, and to make as little noise as possible. I was tormented with a raging thirst; the water was bad and brackish; there was no beer, so that I was obliged to drink either rum and water, or wine. The following night I did not close my eyes. I was exceedingly feverish, spoke confusedly, and feared that my intellects were affected. I rose at seven in the morning in a terrible state, sent for captain Westenholz, who commands here, and requested him to let me have my clothes and papers. "Your papers," replied he, "must all be sent to Copenhagen; your clothes you shall have, and every assistance I can give you." I thanked him gloomily, and wrote four short letters, to be sent off, open, by the post, with his permission. One was to my wife at Mayfield; another was a short representation of my case to the king of Denmark, and a request to be allowed to go on board the Fury bomb ship, off Scaw; the third was to general Bardenfleth, commander in chief in North Jutland; and the fourth was to Mr. Duntzvelt, at Copenhagen.

I was so doubtful of my own powers, for I felt that my head was very much confused, that I begged captain Westenholz to read my letters addressed to the king and general Bardenfleth carefully over, in order to correct any inaccuracies, or remedy any defects. He seemed pleased with



them, and assured me that I exhibited no symptom of a deranged intellect. He remained with me, and behaved very kindly, till ten at night. I went to bed, but could not sleep. I saw my wife and my father wringing their hands, in so lively a manner in my dreams, that when I awoke from what was rather a reverie than sleep, I imagined myself dead, and spoke in the most incoherent manner imaginable to those around me. I had the most terrible head-ache I ever experienced in my life, an unquenchable thirst, and a thundering noise stunned my ears. My arms and legs were all black and blue, and much bruised, by so frequently climbing the rigging, to which I had not been accustomed, and my hands were swelled to more than double their usual size. I had the greatest horror of my own situation, and the more so, as I perceived that I was the only one of the crew who suffered so severely from the consequences of our disaster.

---

## LETTER II.

*Aalborg, Jutland, December 8, 1808.*

IT being probable that I shall be detained here for some weeks, waiting for the arrival from Copenhagen, of the king's answer to the representation of my case which general Bardenfleth has transmitted to him, I shall try to keep off, as far as lies in my power, all melancholy reflections on my condition, and occupy my time as usefully as my present situation will permit.

On the 29th day of November, the eighth after our shipwreck, the crew of Johns were so far recovered from their bruises and fatigue, that captain Westenholz ordered carts from the neighbouring peasantry in order to convey them towards this place. We were accordingly sent off from Scaw at nine in the morning, two of us and a peasant in each cart, escorted by five foot soldiers and three dragoons on horseback.\* The officer at Scaw, had the goodness to

---

\* Prisoners of war are ordered by the king of Denmark to be transported by the peasants from one village to another, on their route, in their common carts, properly cleaned, and at the rate of one Danish mile per hour. They devise many pretexts, however, for not driving according to their orders, and are in general several hours later than they should be, in arriving at their quarters.

appoint as my guard a corporal who spoke German, to assist me in providing myself with necessaries on the road. We travelled at first with no great difficulty along the seashore, where, in the space of one Danish, or four English miles and three-quarters, I counted thirty-five wrecks. We soon, however, left the beach, and followed a sort of track, (for there is no road through this sandy desert), which led us from a quarter to three-quarters of an English mile from the shore. The cold was intense, the snow in some places was drifted to the depth of several feet, and the peasants were frequently at a loss for the pathway. We, of course, travelled very slowly, at the rate sometimes of three English miles, sometimes only one and a half, per hour.

In the whole district around us, as far as the eye could reach on a clear day, there was not a tree, or even a bush or blade of grass, to be seen.

Where the snow had been drifted off the ground by the storm, bare sand or short coarse heath appeared. The few scattered cottages that now and then appeared in sight, corresponded with the universal wretchedness of the scene. They are constructed of the wood of shipwrecked vessels, ill compacted, and clumsily put together, and are alike unfit to shelter their inhabitants from the heat of summer, or the frost of winter.

At the distance of about eight miles from Scaw (I shall always calculate by the English statute mile of 1760 yards, or 5280 English feet), we rested for half an hour, and endeavoured to procure some refreshment. Here, as at Scaw, there was no other bread than a coarse mixture of rye, barley, and fish-bones, pounded and mixed together, and baked into loaves of different sizes, of a snuff colour, and scarcely eatable by persons who have not been accustomed to the very worst food. I had not tasted bread for the nine preceding days, and unluckily tried to force some of this kind down my throat, but nearly lost my life in consequence of the experiment. I became so sick, that I could travel only two miles farther, and was obliged to remain all that evening and night in a peasant's hut near the high road. The poor people did all they could for me, and luckily mustered two eggs and four potatoes, which proved the most seasonable and delicious repast I ever made. The rest of our party were obliged to go forward to Fladstrand, the stage appointed them for the night. They reached that village, as I have since learned, at midnight, half dead with cold and hunger, and were kept in the streets, waiting for billets for

quarters, till two in the morning. Nor was this all ; some of the carts were upset, and two of the sailors and one of the Danish soldiers were much bruised, by the cart-wheels going over their bodies in the snow.

Here, for the first time since I was shipwrecked, I enjoyed an hour's sound sleep, and accordingly felt my head on awaking more settled, and less annoyed by the sound in my ears, than usual ; but still, I was under dreadful apprehensions that my intellects were affected. In this terror I was frequently confirmed by occasional fits of deafness, that rendered me almost unfit for conversation. Such fits I had more than once experienced at Scaw, but they were worse to-day, on account of the violent cold which affected my head and ears.

In this situation, it was fortunate for me to have, besides my worthy corporal (who proved an excellent servant all the way to Aalborg), the company of a young Norwegian merchant, who remained some hours with me, and had, on his way from Fladstrand to Scaw, been accidentally overturned at the door of my hut, where he waited till he got his cart repaired. He was a sensible and intelligent man, as most of the middle ranks in Norway are, and did all he could to be of use to me. He had some wheaten bread and a piece of cold pork with his baggage, which he forced me to accept of, and which I, though no lover of pork, devoured with no little gratitude and relish. This young man, after an hour's conversation in German and English (the former he spoke fluently), assured me that my hearing would be re-established by a few days rest at Aalborg\* ; and that as to any confusion in my ideas, he solemnly assured me, that I had no occasion to be apprehensive on that subject, because my conversation with him, and the expression of my eyes and features, were a complete evidence, that my head was no otherwise injured, than by extreme suffering from cold, hunger, and anxiety. The blow I had received against the top-mast, in saving the cabin-boy the night we were rescued, he also assured me would have no serious consequences ; for he himself had been four days deranged in mind from a similar accident, but soon recovered the perfect use of his faculties. It is impossible to convey in words, the gratitude I felt towards this young Norwegian ;

---

\* He guessed right in both cases, and I must confess, that his assurances were of great benefit to me at the moment, and conduced to the effect which he had predicted.

and welcome as his bread and pork were to a man half-starved, I felt more benefit from his words than from that very seasonable gift.

On the following day, the 30th of November, I proceeded to Fladstrand; and in spite of the cold weather, deep snows, bad roads, and slow-driving, found myself more comfortable, or rather less horribly miserable, than I had done since I was cast on the Jutland shore. About two in the afternoon I reached Fladstrand, a town of little importance, possessing some ships, with a bad harbour, and protected by a battery on the sea-side. The commandant-major, V. Blöte, and lieutenant Henne, of the Danish navy, treated me with all possible kindness, and provided me with as good accommodation for two days as the place afforded. They advised me, on the 2d of December, to set off for Aalborg, as the crew of the *Johns* must have reached that city on the 1st; and the commander in chief, general Bardenfleth, would expect me along with them. I accordingly left Fladstrand on the evening of the 1st, and got that night very late to a sea-port town, or village, called Sæbye. There, notwithstanding a letter from lieutenant Henne, and one from the commandant of Fladstrand, which were, however, of essential use, I was a considerable time detained in the streets, before the burgomaster procured me a lodging. It turned out a most unpleasant one; for, as I was eating my miserable supper of bad fish and four greasy potatoes, in came, without any ceremony, six masters of Danish privateers, half drunk, together with their mates and some comrades belonging to the place, and sat down at the same table with me. It was no time for quarrelling with these people, or insisting upon having the room to myself; there was no other *warmed* room in the house; and if there had been twenty, I dare say I should have obtained none of them. I therefore made a merit of necessity, and behaved to those dangerous associates with all the calm politeness I could assume. They were each armed with a brace of pistols and a cutlass, clad in furred jackets, and wore long mustaches and whiskers. Their total number was about twenty, apparently desperate and daring ruffians. On learning that I was from their enemies' country, they looked alternately at me and at each other, and evidently suspected that I was a spy. I was anxious to remove this idea, lest they should dispatch me in self-defence, and accordingly acquainted them with my situation, and history for the preceding ten days, taking care to add, that I had letters from Fladstrand



to the magistrate of Sæbye, and expected a visit from him every moment. This information seemed to surprise them; and they asked if I knew any thing of the English frigate that chaced them that day near the island of Lessoe. On my answering in the negative, they were more calm and respectful, and helped me the first in company to every thing our coarse table afforded.

The landlord and landlady were a silly pair, and intoxicated with brandy into the bargain. I could look for no assistance from them in case of accidents. My corporal had gone to look for horses and a cart for next day, and I was left alone in the midst of a score of enemies, whose constant occupation is violence, and whose fortunes depend upon blood and rapine. I requested one of them to accompany me for a few minutes to the magistrate's house, as I did not know the way to it; and he, pleased with this mark of confidence, immediately agreed. On our arrival, the official gentleman happened to be in bad humour at the moment, having, as he said, received orders for fifty carts to be sent on his royal master's account the very same way I was to travel on the following day; and he gave me to understand that, in all probability, it would be two days before he could accommodate me. In my situation, this was as bad news as he could have communicated. I requested him to go with me to my lodging, and honour me with his company to a glass of wine. He at length complied, and we sat up till twelve at night, in a cold room, by ourselves, adjoining to that in which my former companions were drinking brandy, and singing. By this time the landlord and his spouse had gone dead drunk to rest, a thing rather unusual in this country; and I discovered that the door of my bed-chamber had no lock, nor did there appear any possibility of securing it against intrusion in the night. My servant, overcome with fatigue, was snoring on a chair; I could not think of venturing to bed while the house continued in the confusion created by the riotous ruffians in the next room; and my anxiety was not removed when I heard, about half past twelve, a whispering in the room next to mine, and also adjoining to that of the privateer men. The words signifying "*d—d English, spies, fine writing-desk, gold, baggage, sleep, unarmed, cutlass,*" and some others not more pleasant, I could make out distinctly, and their application was not doubtful. I took a candle, and instantly went into the room occupied by the captains, and found that they were all there, but that some of the men I had seen with them be-

fore had disappeared. I asked in an easy, indifferent tone, what persons were in the room next to mine, towards the stable-yard? They said they knew nothing about them. I then requested one of them to send me the corporal who accompanied me as a guard from Scaw. They said he had gone to a neighbouring farm three miles off, an hour before, as "there was no room for him in the house, and surely the poor fellow must have his night's rest," &c. &c. I observed a bitterness of tone in the words now used, but was equally surprised and gratified to remark that none of them was much more intoxicated than two hours before, and that they still seemed to feel a kind of respect for me when I entered their room. I therefore remained with them for a quarter of an hour, and on parting told them, that as a stranger, and a man who had wanted sleep for several nights past, I hoped they would allow no intrusion into my room, which was next to them and quite open, and that I placed myself, and the little luggage I had saved from shipwreck, under their protection. The man who had accompanied me to the magistrate's house, and spoke good German, answered, that I might depend upon not being disturbed that night, for he and his companions were to remain where they were till seven in the morning; and no man in Sæbye would dare use me ill while they were my friends. I then thanked them, and went to my room. It was impossible to sleep after the whispering I had formerly heard; but as I was entirely at their mercy, I thought it prudent to betray no suspicion of their honesty, and therefore put off my clothes and went to bed. I kept the candles, however, lighted on my table, and listened attentively to every noise in the house.

At two in the morning, my door was opened, and to my surprise, instead of a sailor with a pistol and sword to murder me, in came the landlord, almost perfectly sober, begging me to extinguish my candles, because the police did not permit any lights to be kept in after midnight. "Well," said I, "put them out, but remember that if any thing happens to any part of my baggage in your house, both you and your lodgers shall be broken on the wheel, for my name and journey are already known at Aalborg and Copenhagen, and you shall be made responsible for any thing that may happen." I did not choose to state to him my fears of personal violence, nor the reasons of those fears. The solemn assurance of the privateer captain, who had a good face and agreeable voice, had given me some hopes that he

would protect me from the whispering villains in the next room.

About an hour after the candles were put out, I heard a violent altercation in the street, and it soon came to the adjoining apartment. I fancied I heard my privateer friend's voice, but could not be certain. I hastily put on my clothes, and went to the door to listen, but the voices died insensibly away; at three o'clock, and a few minutes afterwards, the whole house was as silent as the grave. I had an hour's sleep between six and seven, and got up when my corporal arrived, with a cart and horses, at half past seven. I scolded him for leaving me in such company. "Lord Jesus!" said he, "I was mad with fatigue and cold, and those fellows were so noisy, that I got a violent head-ache, and was obliged to leave the house." I requested him to remember that I was his prisoner, and that if he forsook me again, I would make my escape, in which case he would stand a chance of a severe flogging, or, perhaps, of a bullet through the head. Thus passed a most unpleasant night, and I got off without any further loss than that of some hours' sleep.

On the 3d, we had a dreadful day of snow, sleet, and frost, so bitterly cold, that I frequently lost all feeling in my ears, chin, and nose, and kept them from being frost-bitten by rubbing them with snow. I took up my lodging at a small inn, within twelve miles of Aalborg. This was the first day I ever travelled on sledges in a cart, and it was not very propitious. I was twice overturned in snow, and once in two or three feet water, in the middle of a river. No sooner did I get out of the water, after escaping a very serious danger, than all my clothes froze round my body, even to my neckcloth, which had on its surface a crust of ice an inch thick. In the inn where I stopped, I found poor captain Hutton's dog, which I had saved from the shipwrecked *Johns*, and which his master had left here rather than suffer him to perish on the road. The creature knew me, and I have kept honest *Chance* ever since.

The following day we arrived here to dinner. General Bardenfleth had had the goodness to engage a comfortable lodging for me beforehand.

The arm of the sea called Liimfiord, which forms the harbour of Aalborg, is not above three-quarters of a mile broad here, but it spreads greatly as it enters Jutland further to the westward, and pierces the peninsula for one hundred miles. Vessels of two hundred tons can come to the

town, but the navigation is intricate and precarious. The harbour is now full of vessels, most of them loaded with corn for Norway, and about twenty are prizes taken from us and from Sweden, and brought in here by the Danish privateers. There are twenty-six privateers fitted out from this town; and many more are to be added next season, if the war continue.

It would not be easy to take or destroy the vessels in the harbour, for besides the bar at the mouth of the Liimfiord, sixteen miles below the town, and which has scarcely nine feet water when the wind is calm or moderate, our ships would have a battery to oppose them, and that within a quarter of a mile of the deepest part of the channel. The battery in question is about ten miles below Aalborg, and consists of twelve or fourteen pieces of cannon of large calibre. This, however, I have from report, for I have not myself had an opportunity of seeing the battery.

The site of Aalborg is by no means disagreeable, although it lies rather too low, and the adjacent country is too bare and destitute of hedges. The town takes its name from a small river, the Aal (pronounced Ol), which runs through it, and means Eel, vast quantities of those fish being annually caught and sold here. The town is old, and ill built for the capital of a considerable province; but there are some good dwellings, and very spacious warehouses in it. Its trade was once considerable, but is now destroyed in consequence of the present war, excepting what depends upon the precarious resources of privateering. The population is very near six thousand souls, of whom one-tenth are Jews; some of these are considerable merchants.

The commander in chief, and the bishop of the province, as well as the district judges, reside here. The language commonly spoken is Danish, but the people of rank and education, and indeed all the middling classes, speak German; a few understand English or French. I am quartered in a widow's house, whose husband was a German, and whose children speak that language: it is singular that she herself does not know a word of it, though in other respects she seems to be sufficiently acute.

It is reported in this town to-day that, on the fifth instant, a large English frigate was cast on shore near Rob'snout, on the western coast of this peninsula. The report appears to have some foundation, as a troop of light dragoons are now shipping off for the north of Liimfiord, in order to escort the English prisoners hither.



It is a comfort to recollect, amidst these disastrous rumours, that the Danes have a custom of calling every armed English ship *a large frigate*; and that they delight in spreading every possible bad report of the British navy.

---

### LETTER III.

*Aalborg, December 9, 1808.*

YESTERDAY's report is, alas! but too fatally confirmed. The Crescent frigate, of thirty-six guns, and two hundred and seventy-four men, was lost on the night of the fifth of this month off Lönstrup, thirty or forty miles to the north-west of this town, and the captain, Mr. Temple, three lieutenants, eight midshipmen, and the second lieutenant of marines, with two hundred and twenty men and six women, have perished. The first lieutenant of marines, the master, four midshipmen, the boatswain, and about fifty sailors and marines, have arrived here in the most deplorable condition imaginable. Were a stranger to form his opinion of British soldiers and sailors from seeing them marched as prisoners through an enemy's country, he would have a very erroneous notion of their appearance at home. Never was there a more wretched set of human beings seen than the poor remains of the Crescent's gallant crew. Some of the men had neither hats on their heads, nor shoes on their feet. Some had one boot, and some one shoe, some jackets of their own, and some Danish jackets or great coats, lent them in charity by the peasants or soldiers. They all looked meagre, shrivelled, and diminutive. A person would have imagined that one of their present guards was as bulky as four of them, and that half a dozen Danes would have driven the whole fifty men into the sea. I must confess I felt mortified as well as grieved at their appearance. The whole population of Aalborg was in the streets when they passed, and to their honour be it said, never uttered a single harsh word or an illiberal reflexion. This redounds the more to their credit, because they are very much exasperated against us since the bombardment of Copenhagen and the capture of their fleet; and because

their government does all in its power to cherish and increase the national hatred. The men were sent under a guard to a large house now used as a prison, and the officers were billeted in three houses in the town, with a soldier as a guard at the door of their apartments. Two midshipmen were quartered in this house, because, as the landlady's son told me, he could, by my assistance in the German tongue, be of use to the poor fellows.

From these two young men I received a most melancholy account of the shipwreck. They left Yarmouth with a fair wind the evening of the 29th of November, and had, like the unlucky Johns, a constant storm and dark weather for four days successively, and never saw the sun, moon, or stars, during the voyage. They, however, saw the land near the Naze of Norway on the morning of the 4th, and then stood away for the coast of Jutland, and tried to double the Scaw. On the evening of the 5th they, by the advice of the pilots, brought the ship to on the Jutish shore, in soundings, which, by the way, ought never to be done, but in cases of extreme necessity. The consequence was, that she struck, at ten at night, within two miles of the coast, while the pilots insisted, from the soundings, that she must be at least ten miles from any land : they perished with the ship.

Every endeavour was made to get her off, by throwing her guns, cargo of clothing and slops for our Baltic fleet, overboard, and by cutting away her masts, &c. At three in the afternoon of the 5th, the seventeenth hour after she had struck, her only remaining cable gave way, and no hopes remained of saving any thing of the ship, or even any considerable proportion of the crew. Captain Temple would not hear of parting with her while a man could live upon her deck, and accordingly sacrificed himself to his duty. Two boats had left the ship before the cable parted, in order to carry an anchor to the windward, (the wind was right on shore), but they were drifted by the current to the leeward, and only one of them regained the wreck. The captain ordered as many of them as it could safely carry to go on board that boat, and try to reach the shore. Twenty-two rushed into it, and three times that number threw themselves into the sea in the hopes of being admitted with their comrades. The latter were obliged, in self-defence, to push them from her into the sea, and to see them drowned before their eyes. Some of the stoutest, and who were expert swimmers, got to the boat's side before she could clear the wreck, and

with their half-frozen hands laid hold of her sides and stern, and that in such numbers that she must soon have sunk if they had not quitted their deadly grasp.

This was the most horrid scene of all. The people in the boat cut off the hands and fingers of their unfortunate shipmates with their knives; and one of them saw his father and brother served in this manner. He offered his place in the boat to his father, and wished to die for him, but it was too late; the latter sunk in his sight, to rise no more.

Several then tried to get ashore upon spars, planks, and other pieces of the wreck, but the sea and current ran so furiously that they all perished.

The only resource now remaining was a boat called the captain's gig, and spars, of which, as it was obvious that they could singly be of no avail, it was proposed to form a raft, which might perhaps drift ashore with a few of the crew. When the raft was completed and launched, it looked so ill, that few would venture upon it, and some of those who did venture were only prevented by force from returning again to the wreck of the ship. Five or six were washed off alongside, and seen to perish; and a woman died upon it through cold and fear. It was at last pushed off from the side, and the twenty-eight men upon it gave three cheers as they bade adieu to the wreck.

Twenty-two of the twenty-eight got alive to the shore, but one of them died as they were carrying him in their arms from the raft to the beach. They praise, in the most grateful terms, the conduct of the natives towards them after they reached the shore; and name a Mr. Brandt, and a Mr. Jeremin, minister of Osterbrandersler, as having treated them with all the kindness of humanity and friendship. All whom they left on board the ship perished. They suppose that the captain's gig was stove in pieces soon after they left her, and that the persons put on board a second raft, which they saw half finished, were washed off, or frozen to death, between the Crescent and the land.

One of my fellow-lodgers has lost his brother, a boy of fourteen years of age, who was a midshipman on board the ship, and who could not be prevailed on to venture upon the raft. Many affecting incidents, connected with this melancholy affair, have been related by the survivors. Among others, they mention a charming young woman, who had a beautiful child in her arms, whom she entrusted to one of the officers with these words: "O Sir, God bless you! I am now quite happy, as you will save my child; for

my own life is nothing, if my dear child is saved: pray keep it as warm as you can." She then gave him her cloak and what clothes she could convey to him. The poor woman was washed off the deck along with her husband, and perished while in the act of parental tenderness, and the officer and child soon found the same watery grave.

The loss of the *Crescent* will, I fear, prove a most serious one to our country; for the ships in the Baltic and Cattegat are, by all accounts, in great distress for want of the articles she had on board; and it is likely that her fate cannot be known in England early enough for preventing the most ruinous consequences to many of our ships during this dreadful winter.

The harbour here has been completely frozen since the 3d instant, and the people tell me that it is the same all along the coasts of Norway, Sweden, and the Danish dominions. The frost has set in five weeks earlier than usual, and that with a degree of severity unparalleled during the last hundred years. Reaumur's thermometer stood in this house twelve degrees below the freezing point at two this morning, and sixteen degrees in the northern exposure on the outside of the house. The ice is already in many places from eight to fourteen inches thick, and on this arm of the sea, with a *strong current* and *salt water*, loaded carts are going in all directions. The cold is much more intense than I ever experienced in the British isles.

*Twelve at Night of the 9th.*

I have just returned from supper with a large company, of whom general Bardenfleth and his staff formed a part. They all behaved and talked with great kindness. The fate of the *Crescent*, and the disposal of the surviving part of her crew, were the principal topics of conversation. Her officers and men are to have what clothes and money they stand in need of, and to be exchanged the very first opportunity.

Seventy or eighty bodies have been cast ashore from the wreck at Lönstrup, and decently interred by the inhabitants, who have, by all accounts, behaved with great propriety on this melancholy occasion.

The *Crescent* has gone entirely to pieces, and a very small part of what constituted her cargo has reached the land; that part, small as it is, is claimed by the king of Denmark.

It was reported, two days before the crew arrived here,



that the frigate was one of those taken from Copenhagen in September, 1807; and the patriotic Aalborgers declared, that Divine vengeance was manifested against our robbery and violence, by casting their own ship, with British seamen, ashore upon their injured coast; but they are not so violent since they have learned all the distressing particulars of her fate.

I have now several invitations from different gentlemen of this town, and shall have some opportunity of hearing the national opinions and prejudices.

---

#### LETTER IV.

*Aalborg, December 16, 1808.*

I AM still detained here, waiting for his Danish majesty's answer to my representation and petition sent from Scaw. The papers have, by some unaccountable accident, been mislaid by the clerks in the chancery office for the home department, and Heaven knows when I shall receive them, if ever.

I have this day, by general Bardenfleth's advice, written a second letter to Copenhagen, requesting that my papers, for the security of which I have captain Westenholz's word of honour, may be restored to me, and myself allowed to go, by any channel his majesty may think proper, to Sweden or England.

Although I cannot in any respect complain of my treatment from the king, or any individual whom I have hitherto met in Denmark, yet the delays and mistakes are vexatious, and the more peculiarly so, because time is to me so precious, and the season for returning home is in all probability lost.

The common necessities of life are more than double their usual price: there is very little difference between the prices here and those of London; and if we compare the real value of the articles, the Aalborg prices are unquestionably higher than those of the British metropolis. Meat is from sixpence to ninepence per pound, of eighteen ounces and a half; bread is certainly dearer than in London, but I cannot state precisely how much; a goose costs seven shillings

and sixpence; a fowl, a very scarce article, and bad at the best, two shillings and fourpence; and a small fishy-tasted duck one shilling and tenpence. Cloths, linens, paper, books, leather, stuffs of all kinds, for whatever species of apparel, male or female, are at least eighty per cent. dearer than in London, supposing that they could be procured equally good here, which is far, very far from being the case. It is, therefore, truly laughable to hear some people, who ought to know better, maintain that Denmark will speedily manufacture for herself, and thrive as well without any connection with Great Britain as she has hitherto done with it. With regard to the comparative state, power, and resources of their own country and England, I know no men more violent than the unthinking part of the Danes, and those are too frequently of the higher orders. They have the vanity to fancy that their participation in the war against us will greatly conduce to diminish our resources, and annihilate our means of defence against France; and pretend to be incredulous and half angry when they are told that they injure themselves a hundred times more than us by joining our enemies, and forfeiting the advantages derived from our commercial and friendly relations.

I chanced to say in joke to a gentleman here, who perpetually annoys me with harangues on the bravery and power of the Danish nation, and is sometimes absolutely rude in his comparisons of his countrymen with the British, that no serious analogy could be drawn between the two states, for they were as wide of one another in political existence, as the fly is from the elephant or the whale in the animal kingdom; and, to my regret and astonishment, the man had the folly to take it up seriously, to complain to some of my acquaintance, that I abused this nation, and loudly expressed my hatred and contempt of it. His silly indiscretion ultimately recoiled upon himself, but it occasioned me some moments of uneasiness, and taught me more caution for the future, in venturing to joke with people who have neither delicacy to spare the feelings of others, nor sense to moderate their own. I must, however, do the Danish officers here the justice to say, that in no instance have they deserved this reproach; but that, on the contrary, they have uniformly behaved, since I came among them, with the greatest civility and politeness.

I have been at two balls and evening entertainments, and upon the whole was tolerably well amused. There is a want of female conversation, it is true, and consequently of one

of the great charms of polished society; but the Aalborg ladies, although neither so elegant nor so handsome as the English, nor so well acquainted with their own or with other languages as their countrywomen in Zeeland, or the German and Swedish ladies, are good-humoured and obliging, and pay great attention to their family affairs. There is not that attention paid to their education that there is in many other countries of the north, and consequently they want that elegant and easy mode of address, which so conspicuously adorns the fair sex in England, Sweden, Germany, and France.

The dress of the lower classes of females is as unbecoming as can well be imagined, and seems to have been invented for rendering their charms as harmless and unattractive as possible. They are not only wrapped up, but literally screwed or twisted in, from the hips to the nose, in innumerable volumes of cloth and linen; and below the waist, they are of such a tremendous bulk, that at a distance they look like moving hogsheads. The most fascinating points of the female form, the eyes, lips, chin, and neck, are carefully concealed; and the last-mentioned is so oppressed with stiff bandages, drawn tight below the arms from the period of childhood to that of old age, that the consequences of the scriptural intimation can never occur in Jutland—"Whoever looketh at a woman, &c." How the infants are nourished and nursed, I cannot conceive; for the pressure on the parts in question, must certainly impede the circulation and secretion of the fluids, which are so essentially necessary to the health both of mother and child.

The men dress pretty well: wooden shoes, indeed, of a clumsy and incommodious form, are too generally worn, and cannot suit a dry and sandy soil like Jutland so well as leathern shoes.

It is a threadbare common-place remark, that the peculiar customs, implements, and dresses of the various countries of our globe are founded upon solid reasons of expediency, which will appear evident to the enlightened traveller, who investigates with candour the various circumstances of the case; but I must confess, that as far as my own experience extends, I am of a contrary opinion. It is not reason, but accident or caprice, that usually gives the first impulse to districtal peculiarity, and that peculiarity is afterwards retained from habit. I could name many instances of irrational and even pernicious singularities of this nature in Europe. For example, for what purpose are the immensely

heavy and costly turbans of the people of Greece and European Turkey, which weigh down the head, and bow the neck and shoulders under a scorching sun? How infinitely more convenient are the light broad brimmed hats of the Spaniards and the Chinese? What a poor defence against the storms and rains of his turbulent climate are his little bonnet and philibeg to the Scotch highlander? And, not to go further than this peninsula, or even this town, what a waste of animal force must the clumsy clogs (at least six pounds weight) used here for shoes, occasion? To all my objections on this head, the universal answer was, "They are warm and cheap." Now, as to their warmth, I found, by trial and enquiry, that this property is not inherent, but is merely the effect of the great exertion of carrying them; an exertion so terrible, that even the most active boys cannot walk three miles an hour, nor make a journey of twenty miles a day in them. They have also given the natives such a drawling, hobbling, duck-like walk, that officers whose business it is to drill the North Jutland regiments of infantry complain bitterly of the difficulty of their task. Even after their men get shoes and boots of the common kinds from government, they still retain their old habits of dragging their feet transversely, and they must be drilled for years before they can decently be exhibited and reviewed with other troops.

With regard to cheapness, the clogs cost upwards of two shillings a pair, often break the first day or two that they are worn, and rarely last half a year: but granting that they are cheaper than leather, which is probably the case, how great is the loss of time, strength, activity, and labour which attends the use of them. To them, in a great measure, may be attributed the general sluggishness perceptible in all the operations of this people. Were I king of Denmark, I would lay a heavy tax on them, and give a bounty for leather\* tanned with the bark of the wood, which is so abominably wasted in the manufacture of them.

There are no manufactures of any consequence in this place, excepting that of coarse hats and gloves. A gentleman, who has been for some years in England, has established a stocking manufactory near the town, which seems to promise well, though he complains of the dearness of labour and the general sluggishness and apathy of his work-

---

\* Leather for soles costs one dollar one-third per pound, and thin leather thirty-eight stivers, or three shillings and twopence sterling.



men. I would name this gentleman, had I previously obtained his permission, because he has shewn much kindness to, and conferred substantial benefits on, the survivors of the Crescent frigate since they arrived here; and because he affords one remarkable instance of what we delight to contemplate, patriotism exerted in a foreign land, active and modest benevolence, and these too in the most disinterested shape. He furnished the gentlemen alluded to with various articles of apparel, and would accept of no remuneration whatever, though he has no prospect of ever seeing them again. When we are prisoners in an enemy's country we feel the full value of such characters; and, indeed, acquaintance with them diminishes the regret which always attends the consciousness of misfortune, and makes lighter even the deprivation of liberty.

I was much gratified by an expression of one of our midshipmen to-day, when talking of this gentleman. "I have," said he, "been going to leeward of late, but begin to think that my new rigging from Mr. G\*\*\* will bring me to windward again." This young man had been formerly shipwrecked on the coast of Cornwall, in an English frigate, was one of twenty that were saved out of three hundred men, and had lost all his clothes and little property three times over in the space of four years. He had been twice washed off the raft, and got upon it again, on the evening of the 6th, and came ashore with his life only, and a seven shilling piece in his pocket.

Considerable quantities of corn, chiefly rye and oats, are exported to the Danish isles and to Norway from this harbour, from which about five or six hundred vessels clear out annually. This is the staple trade of the place. A week ago some vessels, loaded with corn, were with great difficulty cut out of the ice in the port, and dispatched for Norway, but more than one half of them were taken by our cruizers off the Scaw, and sent into Gothenburg. This news has spread consternation and distress through the town, for most of the vessels were not insured, and the few that were, only to half of their value. Yet this circumstance makes no difference in the humane treatment experienced by the British prisoners; nor do they even mention the unpleasant occurrence, excepting when some questions are asked about it. This, it is true, is but reasonable and fair; yet there are countries where the public opinion would not remain so quiet.

## LETTER V.

*Aalborg, December 21, 1808.*

I AM at length prevailed on by my friend general Bardenfleth to go to Nijborg, in Funen Island, there to await my answer from Copenhagen, in order to be nearer the only passage to Sweden at this season of the year, viz. the Sound between Elsinour and Helsingborg. To-morrow is fixed for my departure; and the general recommends me to keep company with the officers of the *Crescent*, not one of whom understands any language but English, that I may both be of service to them on their long and arduous journey, and also save his Danish majesty and myself the trouble of an additional escort. To this I cheerfully agreed, and have packed up the few scattered articles I saved from the *Johns*.

Walking round the town this morning, I met with a farmer much superior in equipage and dress to the common peasantry of this country, and entered into conversation with him. He had the Banffshire accent as strong as if he had yesterday left Cullen. I therefore addressed him in Lowland Scotch, in which he answered me with evident satisfaction. His father came to this country forty years ago, and remained in Jutland until he acquired an independency, part of which he left to his son here, and with the rest he has removed to Zeeland, and become a great farmer and proprietor of land.

This man has married a Jutland woman, and seems to be doing extremely well. His farm is three miles and a half from Aalborg, towards the south east; and although it displays no great agricultural excellence, yet it is worth seeing. In his neighbourhood, a gentleman has endeavoured to introduce Scotch farming and Scotch servants, and with some success. He has even erected a thrashing machine; but both he and the Banffshire man, Mr. Ogilvy, complain much of the stupidity and inveterate prejudices of their neighbours.

Green crops are not cultivated to any extent, except potatoes, which are deservedly and fortunately gaining ground every year; nor, indeed, can any be prosecuted with success while the land continues, as at present, unenclosed, and liable to common pasturage the moment the crop is removed

from the fields. Draining and irrigation, which might both be used with immense benefit, are almost unknown.

The common practice, instead of a rotation of culiniferous and leguminous crops, and of fallow, is to force one rye, barley, oat, or potatoe crop after another, from the land, as long as it has strength to produce two returns for seed thinly scattered over an indefinite space, and until it becomes a mere *caput mortuum*, when it is left lea for years, to recruit in the best way it can. A little lime (which abounds in Jutland) is used now and then for manure, but the soil is in general too light, warm, and sandy, for the application of that stimulating medium. Composts of moss, lime, and dung, are the only symptom of improved agriculture that occurred on my way to Mr. Ogilvy's farm; and of these I reckoned only twelve, though the whole three miles and a half shew a cultivated and populous country. The great deficiency, and that without which nothing essential can ever be done for the advantage of husbandry, is the absolute want of enclosures.

The species of potatoe common in this country is the small round or oblong Dutch, which is a dry and sweet kind, but not so fruitful nor prolific as our Spanish and Irish sorts. Comparing the measures of this country (for every thing immediately springing from the ground is sold by measure, and not by weight) with our measure in Scotland, and making allowance for Mr. Ogilvy's patriotic ardour, I believe I am near the truth when I fix the produce of a Scotch acre of potatoes here, in a good season, at sixteen bolls; of barley at six bolls; of oats at five bolls; and of rye at from four to seven bolls.

Although some pease and beans are reared in Jutland, and in some districts, as I am informed, in considerable quantities, yet I can learn nothing of the manner in which they are managed, of the quantities grown per acre, or, indeed, any thing at all about them.

The land is, comparatively, of little value; the main object, therefore, is to have a considerable extent sown with great economy in point of seed.

The usual denomination by which landed tenures are held and expressed is, so many tons (a kind of barrel measure) of hard corn. By this is meant a quantity of ground, in which the specified number of barrels of rye-seed may be sown according to use and custom in the country. It is an indefinite and confused standard, and accordingly land sells at prices as various as 1, 1000. The taxes are laid on land,

and the various privileges or duties of the landed proprietors and the nobility, are appreciated in proportion to these tons of hard corn; and so are the *corvées*, carriages, and other public burdens incumbent upon the peasantry of every class.

One good regulation is observed throughout Jutland; viz. that which enjoins the prevention of sand-drift. Bent grass, *Arundo arenaria*, *Lin.* is not only never allowed to be destroyed, but is cultivated with great care, both by sowing and planting, in all the sandy districts. Other grasses are also encouraged to grow; and no sheep or cow-folds, so destructive in the Scottish Hebrides, are permitted to be built on such ground.

An improvement adopted of late years over all the royal domain lands, which are of great extent in this peninsula, is the sub-division of the peasants' possessions, and the building of farm-houses and offices in each of them. Formerly they dwelt in villages, and the portions of land cultivated were managed in run-rig, or alternate and accidental possession, by all the peasants of the village. On many estates this is still the case; but the advantages of giving every man his separate farm are so great and obvious, that, in spite of old prejudices, the new arrangement is cheerfully adopted.

There is a general appearance of ease and comfort among the peasants; an unequivocal proof of which is the fatness of their children, and the plumpness and sleekness of their horses. With regard to the latter, great attention is paid by the magistrates and persons in office, to prevent the intrusion of small or bad stallions, which is, indeed, a matter of royal edict, and of ancient regulation. Since I came to Jutland, I have not seen what could fairly be called a bad horse. The common size is from thirteen and a half to fifteen hands high, and they are firm, well knit, hardy creatures, exceedingly powerful in draught, and fit for every useful work, although better adapted for the cart than the saddle. They are in shape very like the valuable Suffolk breed, commonly called Suffolk punches; and the cost of each is from eighteen to thirty pounds sterling. So much care does the government take to enforce the salutary regulations about stallions, that I have not, either in this town, or in the whole of my journey of seventy miles from Scaw, seen one horse of a bad form, or less than thirteen hands high, although I daily see many hundred peasants' carts, each drawn by two horses, coming with corn, to be shipped for Norway on government account.

The agricultural implements are so infinitely below the



British, and especially those of the Scotch and northern English, that they deserve no mention. Every cart in Denmark has four wheels: its body is a narrow box, about from seven to nine feet long, and three feet broad at top, and fifteen or sixteen inches broad at bottom; each of them contains about half as much as a one-horse English cart. When the load is so heavy, that two horses cannot conveniently trot (they always trot, and sometimes gallop, whether they are loaded or not), the carter yokes three or four horses a-breast, and squeezes them through the narrow roads as well as he can. This is, by the way, an ancient custom of yoking horses, and holds to this day in many parts of Europe and the east. It furnishes a proof, if any proof were wanting, of what I have already remarked, that many habits, however generally followed and obstinately retained, are neither founded in utility, reason, nor expediency. To a man accustomed to see the improved British mode of applying the power of draught cattle, nothing can be more distressing, than to witness the laborious tugging, opposite pulling, and ill-directed exertions of these generous and abused animals. Should he, however, attempt to explain to the Jutlander or the Brandenburgher the absurdity of condemning a horse to draw side-ways, when he might be made to draw lengthways, with at least one-third more power, he must expect either to be laughed at, or to hear the old jargon, "You have one way, we have another as our fathers had, and we think it the best."

"True; but your fathers erred, like other men, in many things, and you should improve what they left you. You are not enemies to all changes. You increase your fortunes; you change the course of your rivulets; and you get Spanish sheep, because they have better wool, and bring more money than your own."

"No, sir," they reply, "we never tried our horses one before the other, or two before two; they would not go so; nor are we so foolish as to wish to try such ridiculous experiments."

If you complain to the gentlemen, under the idea that they might have an influence upon the peasants' treatment of their horses, or might themselves set a better example with their own cattle, they answer in as childish a style as the boors. They tell you that they have a thousand times told the peasants how foolishly they acted in yoking their horses four or six a-breast, but that the obstinate rascals would take no advice; nor could they prevail on even

their own servants to drive in the British and rational manner.

I have accidentally mentioned Spanish sheep. They are introduced, in small flocks, into different parts of this province, but it appears to me that they have degenerated in consequence of bad keeping; for the wool of those which I examined to-day is much coarser than any Merino wool I have hitherto seen, and the animals themselves are diminutive and ugly. The common price is four dollars, or fifteen shillings sterling, for ewes, and two dollars for lambs of six weeks old. Their fleeces do not seem to be turned to good account in this part of the monarchy, for cloth is very bad, and extravagantly dear.

Having lost my clothes on board the ship in which I was cast ashore, I was under the necessity of buying a few articles of dress here. Granting that I was somewhat imposed upon, as is always the case with strangers in every town over the continent, nay, making all allowances for such imposition, yet the price was most enormous. A cloth that would not find a buyer in any town or village of England, cost me at the rate of twenty shillings per yard; and the tailor charged one-third more for his wretched work, than I ever paid in Bond-street, or St. James's, to excellent London tailors.

The sheep indigenous in Jutland are a small hardy breed, like the white-faced Scottish. The sandy nature of the soil, and the poor fare on which they subsist, unquestionably affect their flesh and wool. These are both of a coarse nature. Their common price is from ten to fourteen shillings sterling.

The cows are in general excellent milkers, and might be introduced with advantage, and indeed are introduced, into the adjacent countries. They are almost all branded; and in more than one respect resemble our Lancashire breed. No attention is paid to the horns, or, as far as I can learn, to the race or figure of the bulls. Both cows and sheep are fed all winter on a little barley and chopped straw, mixed with some meadow hay. A fat cow in winter is a rarity in the north of Jutland, which, during that season is scantily supplied with beef from Sleswig and Holstein.

Butter is well made, and extremely well tasted; but the cheese is beyond comparison the worst I have ever seen. The price of English and Dutch cheese is, therefore, very high, in proportion to the other articles of family consumption.

The peasants manufacture coarse cloths for their families. They are fond, like our Highlanders and Welsh, of gaudy,

striped, various-coloured stuffs, and more particularly of blue, red, and yellow. The military all wear red uniforms, except the cavalry, which, as in other countries, have different kinds of dresses.

I hear many complaints of the number of peasants whom the present war forces\* into the army from the labours of agriculture, and other useful occupations; but the people are quiet and resigned. They all have the idea that the war with England could not have been avoided, and firmly believe that we began it merely to obtain possession of their fleet, and keep to ourselves the Danish ships and property which have been sold, or are detained in our ports. Hence they all, without exception, look upon us as robbers, and frequently made no ceremony of calling us so, without any notion of our taking such a compliment amiss.

The salaries of officers in the army, and of persons employed by government, in civil capacities, are wholly inadequate to their subsistence, or to the maintenance of the rank which they formerly enjoyed in the state. This is at present more distressing to them than ever. Within the last fourteen months, the prices of every article requisite for household economy are doubled, while the dollar, the standard which regulates prices and payments, has fallen to nearly one-half of its former value. An ensign's pay is nine dollars per month, or, according to the real value in English money, and the Hamburgh course of exchange, thirty shillings sterling, *i. e.* one shilling per day, in a country where a decent dinner will cost him half-a-crown, and a bottle of port wine three shillings and sixpence. The pay of a lieutenant is fourteen dollars per month, and of a captain about sixty; that of a common soldier is five-pence per day in time of war, and a loaf of bread every fifth day, worth about a shilling. In time of peace their pay is only two-pence halfpenny sterling over and above the loaf. The last they commonly barter for brandy.

This smallness of pay must produce discontent among the military, who know that their equals in other countries are much better paid; and it has the further pernicious tendency of making commissions in the army of very little value, and consequently liable to be granted without discrimination to men from the inferior orders of society. In fact, I have been told that, since the beginning of the pre-

---

\* I shall state my sentiments on the military arrangements of Denmark when I come to Zealand, and after I shall have conversed with some intelligent men, in the course of my travels through the kingdom to the metropolis.

sent war, the general run of officers, both in the Danish army and navy, and especially in the militia regiments, has much degenerated. This is, beyond all comparison, more disadvantageous to an unlimited, despotic, continental monarchy, than to a country like Great Britain. In the former, the nobility and landed proprietors, who are generally very numerous, can apply to no profession but the army or the church. Commerce is looked upon as degrading to a family of rank, and to all its connections. No mode of employment, therefore, remains for the younger sons of such families, when they are prevented from entering the army, on account of the intermixture of plebeians by which it is now disgraced. Among us, on the contrary, the younger sons of noble or affluent families have not only military, naval, ecclesiastical, and medical preferments to look to, but they may also, without reproach, enter into trade, or even live as farmers and manufacturers.

Many enlightened Frenchmen have declared, that the ruin of the French monarchy was accelerated by the evil to which I allude ; and at this moment we see its baneful effects in Prussia, Austria, Russia, and Denmark.

The money of Jutland is the common Danish currency, universal over the provinces, except in the duchy of Holstein. I shall have occasion to mention something on this subject hereafter ; and, therefore, notice it there merely as a matter of curiosity. You cannot procure any coin in Aalborg ; all is grey paper dollars ; and if you go into a shop to buy a pennyworth of bread, or a glass of brandy, you must either leave a paper dollar in deposit, or purchase at different times, or of other things, what will amount to its value. The inconvenience resulting from this want of metallic currency is prodigious ; it is one of the most prominent causes of public complaint ; and, unfortunately, it cannot be easily removed.

Engaged as Denmark is, with allies and enemies equally dangerous, and, whatever may be the issue of the war between France and Britain, compelled to submit to multifarious sacrifices or to inevitable destruction, it cannot be expected that the people will place much confidence in their government. A man who can lay his hands upon hard silver dollars will not give them in exchange for paper, which is to-day lower than it was yesterday, and may to-morrow be of no value at all. The peasants accordingly hoard up all the silver and copper they can seize upon, and never part with them as long as they have paper or credit.



The value of the Danish dollar in 1804 was four shillings and sixpence, and is at present two shillings and four-pence!

The price of labour is very high. Common workmen earn two shillings per day, and tradesmen frequently four or five shillings sterling, and carpenters even six shillings or six shillings and sixpence. This is the more surprising, when we consider that, excepting the few Germans who are settled here, the common people do not perform two-thirds of what an English labourer would do with perfect ease.

The Jutlanders are not a handsome race, but the men are tall and tolerably good-looking, though in general in-kneed, and slender in the limbs. The fair sex (as they may certainly be called, on account of their hair and complexion, which are white even to insipidity) are not so handsome in proportion as the men. Young girls, middle-aged, and old women, use the same kind of dress, so that it requires some more attention than, perhaps, an uncomplaisant stranger will give himself the trouble of paying, to distinguish between a woman of sixteen and sixty.

After what I have said of them, it is but just and candid to add, that I found them uncommonly good-humoured and obliging. Not one instance of a tendency to scolding, anger, or ill-nature, came under my observation; and if they have not the external and personal attractions for which the dear sex is generally conspicuous, they appear to possess what is more substantially valuable, true feminine softness of manners, and sweetness of disposition.

---

## LETTER V.

*Aalborg, Dec. 7, in the Morning.*

I CANNOT leave this place without acknowledging my obligations to many of its worthy inhabitants. That general Bardenfleth and his staff should conduct themselves with humanity towards unfortunate men, cast by stress of weather on their coasts, was to be expected; for it was their duty, in which to have failed would have been disgraceful. But they did not content themselves with the bare performance

of their duty. They seized every opportunity to make the period of our confinement as agreeable to us as possible, and exerted all their influence to shorten that period. There is the more merit in this conduct, because their government is by no means leniently disposed towards the subjects of Great Britain. It is, however, far from my wish to pay those excellent men a compliment at the expence of their duty to their country, which, as military men, essentially consist in faithfully acting up to the intentions, and executing the plans of their court. Such a compliment would be regarded by them as an odious contrast, committing them with their king, by the folly and indiscretion of the very man whom they had so much obliged. I must, therefore, do them the justice to add, that in all the kindness and attention shewn to myself and my countrymen, they uniformly declared that they discharged their duty to their sovereign in the manner which they knew would be most acceptable to him; for that no man in the nation possessed more active benevolence than himself.

The principal merchants and citizens of Aalborg followed the example set them by these liberal-minded officers. They frequently invited us to their houses, and tried every species of amusement to make our misfortunes bear as lightly as possible upon us.

I visited the prison where the sailors and marines of the *Crescent*, together with some other English and Swedish prisoners were confined; and am happy to say that their condition was as comfortable as could reasonably be expected. They were allowed warm rooms; decent, clean beds; and the liberty of walking out occasionally under a proper escort. The daily pay of each common man was eight-pence sterling, and of each master of a vessel, or petty officer of a man of war, three times that sum.

I was sorry to find injurious, and, as I am convinced, false reports universally spread among the Danes, concerning the treatment of their countrymen who are prisoners in Britain and Sweden. They believe them to be starved, and by means of threats forced into our service. Many letters to that purport are said to have arrived from some of the captives, but nobody would shew me such letters. When I complained of their injustice in refusing to produce the letters which were asserted to contain the proof of facts that reflected so much dishonour on my country, they excused themselves by the subterfuge, "that their friends who wrote them begged not to be named, and even wrote on the express

condition that nothing should be said about them to the British or Swedes, as the prisoners might in consequence be exposed to still worse treatment."

All the indignation I expressed at hearing such abominable calumnies against two of the most magnanimous nations in the world, produced not the slightest effect. The Danes actually believe the very worst that they hear of our nations, and especially of Sweden; of which country their hatred seems to be deep-rooted and implacable.

We are to set off in a quarter of an hour for Zeeland, and are to halt this night at a village called Hobre, six and a half Danish, or about thirty and one-third English miles from Aalborg.

Our conveyance is the common open carts of the country, which in summer would answer well enough, but are excessively cold during the present severe weather. Our escort is composed of a captain, two serjeants and four soldiers, who are to accompany us to Nijborg in Funen. The captain speaks German, and is a man of excellent character.

Notwithstanding we have before us a cold, long journey of nine days, we are all in high spirits. Such is the charm which ever accompanies the prospect of freedom; and so exhilarating is the hope of speedily seeing our friends in the dear green isle of the brave.

We arrived at Hobroe at five in the evening of the 22d, but owing to the want of proper previous arrangements, were detained a long time in the streets waiting for billets, and should have been kept much longer, had not our guards and captain exerted themselves with extraordinary activity. We are eight British and two servants, besides our escort. This little village, improperly styled a town, and enjoying the privileges of one, contains only 488 inhabitants, who seem to be completely borne down by a constant succession of calls to provide quarters for soldiers, and carriages on government account. We travelled slowly by reason of the snow, and generally through a poor ill cultivated country.

Not suspecting that we should be unable to procure food in the villages which are marked on the map of the district, through which we have passed, we neglected to provide ourselves with any articles at Aalborg, and were, in consequence, obliged to fast from the time of leaving that place. Experience will teach us more wisdom in future. It seems likely, from the appearance of my landlady, that I shall get nothing till ten; and even at that late hour, I am promised only a bit of cold veal re-warmed, and some rye bread, the

universal food of the peninsula. It is impossible to conceive the apathy and frozen indifference of a Danish landlady, in a country village.

The cold has been almost intolerable. Some of the convoy, or as they call us, *transport*, were frequently obliged to get down from the carts, and walk on foot through the snow, in order to prevent the effects of the frost on their feet, which were frequently benumbed into insensibility. Accordingly we all dread the journey before us much more than we did when we left Aalborg, this morning. For my own part, however, I think it a pleasant jaunt in comparison with the journey from Scaw, and resolve to be thankful that it is not worse.

We got in safety to Randers on the evening of the 24th, and with more comfort than any of our company had expected. It is about twenty English miles from Hobroe; but we drove that distance with unusual speed, as we were less than six hours on the road.

Our accommodation is good, but the bill is enormously high. For the supper of eight persons, including three bottles of weak wine; and for a cup of coffee, and a bit of biscuit, which was the breakfast of each of us, we are charged twenty dollars!! Had they fixed it at eight, it would still be dear, but not exorbitant, at least so our escort told us this morning; but we must pay, and therefore it is useless to complain. Every bill we have had has been shameful.

Randers is a neat little town, containing 4600 inhabitants, who carry on some woollen manufacture, and a little trade. They catch and cure considerable quantities of salmon, which are exported to the isles and the southern parts of the peninsula, and they have also the advantage of possessing a military storehouse in the town.

This produces a degree of bustle and activity very unusual in other parts of Jutland, and gives lucrative employment to all the industrious natives. Yet they complain as much as the people of Aalborg, and wish for a speedy return of peace.

We are just informed that we are not to travel by Aarhus, (pronounced Arhoos) but must turn off the great road, to the right. The reason is, that at Aarhus, which is a considerable sea-port town, containing 4300 souls, there is a battery, and they are afraid forsooth, that we should take the battery, or at least make some dangerous discoveries.

Aarhus is the seat of a bishop, and a place of some trade.



In the cathedral is buried one Christian Drackenberg, a Norwegian, who died at the age of 146 years.

There is a packet boat, which in time of peace, sails regularly from Aarhus to Callundborg in Zeeland, a distance of about fifty-five miles.

The main Jutland road passes through Aarhus to Horsens, a fine little town, with 2400 inhabitants, distinguished by their industry and cleanliness. We go to Skanderborg, a village, but called a town, the population of which is marked in my list at 480 souls.

The country is sandy, and in general, naked. Some lakes skirted with wood, now and then diversify the scene, and must in summer render this rather a pleasant country; but its surface is at present covered with snow and ice, so that it is impossible to form a correct judgment as to its soil, fertility, or management. In almost the whole of Jutland, the traveller is struck with the number of earthen tumuli, or hillocks, which obtrude themselves constantly on his view. They have evidently been constructed by art, and are frequently of a large size; some of them being upwards of twenty feet high, and three hundred in circumference at the base. They appear indiscriminately in the midst of barren heaths, and of the richest fields; of sequestered solitudes, and of populous districts, and are exactly similar to those which we have in Dorsetshire, and other parts of the south of England.

The Danes have no answer when asked about them, but that they were made long, long ago, perhaps at the creation. Their position relatively to each other, to rivers, lakes, and the points of the compass, does not seem to have been regulated on any studied principle. Some have been levelled of late years, for they consist of the best part of the soil, the surface stratum, and it is said that arms and ancient coins have been found in them, and likewise human skeletons in stone coffins; but by a singular fatality in inquiry, I have not been able with all my patience and activity, to meet one person who has actually seen these objects. Nor are any arms or skeletons so discovered, preserved in any cabinets of curiosities, or in any other repository of which I can hear. It is, however, highly probable that these tumuli were erected in honour of persons of note in Jutland, in the same manner as similar ones were reared by the Greeks and Trojans in the Troad, and as cairns of stones were piled over the remains of heroes in the Highlands and isles of Scotland.

The immense number of them, as well as their size, are the only circumstances which stagger our belief in their being the work of men's hands ; but every doubt is removed by their form, and the thinness of the soil in their immediate vicinity. They convey a high idea of the population and power of this country in ancient times.

Veile, a neat sea-port town, in which, when I left Leith, I little expected to spend my Christmas Day, lies in one of the loveliest situations that can be imagined. It is surrounded by wooden eminences, and by some beautiful expanses of water. It would be reckoned romantic in Upper Austria or Switzerland, and that is no trifling compliment to any place.

Here we overtook the English prisoners from Aalborg and Viborg, who had been sent off a week before us ; and this naturally occasioned some delay and confusion in procuring lodgings for so many, we being upwards of eighty in number. But the persons to whom we were entrusted, did their best, and we are tolerably comfortable. The captain who accompanies the prisoners from Viborg, told me yesterday evening, that, during the second night of the bombardment of Copenhagen, his wife, twenty-six years of age, who was pregnant, and his eldest boy, three years old, were killed by a shell, which burst in his bed-room ; and himself, and his only remaining child were badly wounded.

---

## LETTER VI.

*Middelfahrt, in the Island of Funen, (pronounced Feeyn),  
26th December, 1808.*

WE arrived here yesterday about four in the afternoon, after a cold, but not uninteresting drive of twenty-one miles and two-thirds in five hours. The country is very picturesque. As we advanced towards the Belt, the farm houses and villages improved, and agriculture, as far as I could judge from the direction of the ridges, and a few enclosures, is better understood here than in North Jutland.

Not having for a month past seen a watery surface, the first sight of the Little Belt, which separates the island of

Fünen from the main land of Jutland and Sleswig, was a real luxury. It was a great relief from the perpetual snow and ice to which we have of late been condemned. Our sailors accordingly cried out, with all the joy of the ten thousand Greeks under Xenophon, "the sea, the sea!"—"By G—d," added my facetious midshipman, "we see our own property at last, none of their shoal coasts can take our sea as they do our frigates from us; that's one good thing," &c.

At Snoghoj, on the southern side of the Belt, there is a shady solitary inn, or rather alehouse, in which persons detained from Middelfahrt, by contrary winds, must make themselves as easy as they can, for the good people of the house will not give themselves much trouble about them.

It was on embarking here for the other side, and gently objecting to the great number of people, carts, &c. put into the vessel, that I experienced, from the man who has the charge of the packet boat, the first instance of downright intentional rudeness, since I came to Denmark. The stream was rapid, the vessel awkward, and the wind strong and squally. The man himself was not to embark. He crammed us in, like so many pigs, and was rough and boisterous to those, who did not squeeze themselves closer together than they conveniently could. I told him that we were accustomed to the sea, and would make no unreasonable opposition to his arrangements, being as desirous of crossing as he possibly could be of sending us; but that really the boat was too much lumbered, and that accidents might happen, as had last week happened, on this very passage, where three people were drowned from similar carelessness. Upon this temperate remonstrance, he flew into a violent fury, and swore that I should not be permitted to make any objections, reasonable or unreasonable; that he knew his duty, and would perform it, in spite of all the arrogant English in the universe; that I ought to recollect I was not now in England, but in Denmark; and that I should do well to remember my situation, and not put on any bullying airs. I calmly answered, for now the attention of upwards of one hundred persons was turned upon our dispute, that my present situation was brought sufficiently to my recollection by his spirited and very courageous speech; that I did indeed feel the difference between being in Denmark and in England, in the latter of which countries, if a man wearing the king's uniform, used ungentlemanly language to a prisoner, he would be ruined in his character, and scorned by every one

as a coward, who availed himself of his accidental power to add insult to misfortune, and to threaten those in his own country whom he would not elsewhere venture to look in the face. I expected he would draw his sword or do something violent, and was prepared to defend myself in the best way I could; but his own countrymen intimidated him by their general disapprobation of what he had said, and he ran on shore with horrid imprecations against myself and my *murderous* countrymen. I called after him to give me his name, but he flew off without returning any answer.

We contrived to effect our passage safely, and during the thirty-eight minutes it lasted (the distance is not above a mile and a half), my honest countrymen betrayed signs of our national spirit. Every thing done on board by the Danish sailors was "slow, clumsy, and fresh-water like, their sails were ill-set,—the vessel sailed like a tub,—the fellows trimmed her like land-lubbers," with many other observations of the same kind.

Arrived at length here, we were, in the course of the next hour, quartered on the citizens, and have no reason to complain of our treatment. My landlord tells me that, about six months ago, he had eighty-three French soldiers constantly in his house, and living entirely at his expence. Rather than await a second visit of the French here, he would to-morrow, he assured me, gladly sell his possessions in this town, which are considerable, could he procure half their value for them, and remove to any other country. The same sentiment is general throughout the place. The utmost terror is expressed of a return of their Gallic allies, and of the melancholy consequences which must result from the present connection between Denmark and France.

My worthy host complained also of the impertinent demands which the French officers, quartered upon him, perpetually made, of better wines and food than he could procure for them; and he declared to me, upon his honour, that they frequently insulted his wife and daughter before his face, with gross and indecent language. The expences to which he was put for their subsistence, during the stay of the French army in Fünen, he estimated at six thousand dollars, or upwards of one thousand pounds sterling, which he says, is one eighth of his fortune.

The Spaniards, commanded by the marquis de la Romana, behaved infinitely better. They were in general satisfied with what they received, never behaved arrogantly or im-



properly towards females, and cheerfully paid for whatever they desired to have beyond the ordinary allowance.

This honourable distinction between the two nations, I have found to be universally allowed since I came to Aalborg, and by every person with whom, during my journey, I conversed on the subject.

Middelfahrt is a neat little town, with a bad harbour, but as the Belt is so narrow, it supplies necessities, without any difficulty, to those vessels that pass through.

The population is about one thousand; apparently tradesmen, inn-keepers and sea-faring people. There is no striking difference between the country, or the people, and those of the opposite mainland coast.

Fünen, however, seems to be more carefully cultivated and better enclosed. We shall set off to-morrow for Odensee, the capital of Fünen, and the seat of a bishop, and of a general officer for the island.

---

## LETTER VII.

*Odensee, in Fünen, 27th Dec. 1808.*

WE arrived two hours ago in this insular capital, after a journey of twenty-eight miles and a half, from Middelfahrt, through a pretty rich level country, tolerably well enclosed, and containing fewer neglected spots than the Jutland districts. The land is subdivided into separate farms. Sand prevails too much in the soil, but it is the gravelly sand, mixed with a portion of clay and loam, which constitutes a sharp and productive mould. The roads are excellent at present, for the snow is hardened upon them in quantities sufficient to consolidate the sand, and make the surface as hard as stone. We accordingly travel very quick, sometimes six or seven miles an hour, and rarely less than five.

As we advanced from Middelfahrt, the island improved in its appearance. What I have heard, however, of the great fertility and excellent farming of this district, seems to me an exaggeration.

The Danes indeed, are not a little addicted to such patriotic hyperboles regarding their country. Fünen, as far as

I have had an opportunity of judging, both now and five years ago, is not by any means to be compared, either in fertility of soil, or in skilful management, with some parts of Holstein, and the higher German principalities, and still less with the general run of English counties.

As a proof of this, I need only mention the general cultivation of rye; a species of grain the culture of which it would perhaps be adviseable to forbid in every country where any thing else will grow. Of all crops, it is the most exhausting to the soil, and it is precarious and capricious with regard to the seasons and the weather.

I am informed here, that I have missed the finest part of this isle, viz. the southern and south western extremities. This may, perhaps, be true, but I am apt to suspect that this observation also was dictated by the same ardour of patriotism, to which I have already alluded; and that the high name of Fünen, as the granary and agricultural model of the Danish states, rests merely upon its superiority to Zeeland, and the most of the smaller isles.

The hedges are constructed of willow-twigg wicker-work, like those of Dorsetshire. Very few living thorn hedges, if any, are reared; and what is surprising, in a cold dry country, which abounds with detached blocks of granite, of very commodious sizes, scarcely any stone dykes are to be seen. The ridges are rather straighter than in Jutland, but much still remains to be done both in straightening and leveling them.

I saw two or three drains, but they are miserably ill made. Instead of our mode of forming a passage for the water, by building the bottom and sides carefully with stones, and securing the roof of the drain from falling in, or even from admitting any earth or sand into the channel, the Fünen drains are rumbling syvers only about eight inches below the surface of the ground, and cannot be expected to remain unchoked above one or two years.

The cattle and horses resemble those of Jutland, but the latter being harder worked, are in general smaller and leaner. The peasants complain bitterly of providing carriages and services on government account.

When I left Middelfahrt, in a cart drawn by two miserable little animals, the most unsightly I had yet seen in Denmark, I little thought that I was to have no fresh horses until I should arrive here, a distance of twenty-eight miles and a half; and still less could I have imagined, that they would accomplish the journey. Yet they have not only

accomplished it, but have also appeared rather to gain than to lose vigour on the road. It is indeed wonderful how the poor creatures hold out so well. The postillions are extremely obliging and easy to deal with, and the attention of the government to render the posting establishment as perfect as possible for the accommodation of passengers, is highly laudable.

The hour and minute of the traveller's arrival and setting off are noted down in a book kept at every post-house, and the law enjoins the driver not to keep his employer waiting above half an hour, and to travel at the rate of one Danish mile per hour. If he fail in any respect, the traveller marks his complaint in the billet which the driver must give his master on his return home with his horses.

It is a convincing proof that this check upon the post-boys is not an empty form, that I have often seen them exhibit considerable fear and anxiety when a stranger found fault with them, or used any threat. How different from the mulish Saxon and the brutal Prussian postillions!

The approach to Odensee is striking on account of the extraordinary straightness of the road. For four English miles, it is as straight as an arrow. The traveller at that distance sees the church steeple arise as it were from the middle of the road, and has the same view until he enters the town.

Odensee, or Odense, the capital of Fünen, the seat of a bishop, and of the military commander of the island, is a straggling town, containing 5400 inhabitants, exclusively of two regiments of infantry, and eight squadrons of cavalry, who are here at present. There are some good houses, but the general aspect of the place is not wealthy.

The site of Odensee, a mile or two from the sea, where it might have had the advantage of a good harbour, strikes a stranger as injudicious; and the more so, because the neighbourhood is a dead level, and the situation of the town has no visible superiority over any other part of the district.

The only manufacture of consequence carried on in Odensee, is that of leather, and especially of gloves. They are very far inferior to the English; but yet, compared with those of other countries, they are not despicable. In proportion to their value they are dearer than the English; and the same is the case with every thing here.

The cathedral contains a variety of monuments, some of which are of marble, and not inelegant. It has likewise an altar piece, with gilded ornaments of much labour and

little ingenuity. There is nothing else in the place worthy of particular notice.

There is no nation that I know of, which spends so much money in tomb-stones as the Danish. The churches are all full of them, and many, even in obscure villages, must have cost several hundred dollars each. Is this a proof of affection for the deceased, or of vanity in the living? Perhaps both causes have united in this country, with the constitutional melancholy of the people, to produce the effect in question.

General Bardenfleth had mentioned my name to his son, a captain of dragoons, on the staff here, who, like his excellent father, has been very kind and attentive to me. At his house I met a Spanish officer. He is here a prisoner of war, since the departure of the marquis de la Romana.

We felt for each other the kindness of fellow-citizens who meet in a foreign land, embarked in the same cause, and incurring the same dangers. He had not heard from Spain since the month of April last. Any little intelligence of the late occurrences in Spain, which I could communicate from memory, was, therefore, very welcome; and we spent several hours in a most interesting conversation. The conduct of the Danes towards him, he praises as exceedingly humane and delicate, and especially that of young Bardenfleth and his amiable lady.

My quarters here promised at first very little comfort; for when I arrived, there was nobody in the house who spoke any other language than common *peasant* Danish. In this predicament, I, as usual, had recourse to the mistress of the dwelling.

It is always ten to one but what you succeed in making a woman understand you, if you have a quarter of an hour's time, and a little portion of patience to explain yourself.

I do not, in a case of this kind, remember one instance of a rude answer from a woman; but I have had fifty such answers, or perhaps no answer at all, from men. To the young landlady, therefore, I went, and we had not been five minutes together before she completely understood all my wants. Her Danish, and my German mixed with Danish, were mutually intelligible. I got an excellent dinner, good wine, and a clean room; and, in short, fared like a prince. She introduced me to her husband, who was also civil, but his nature had not in it the amiable friendliness of his better half. It was a real pleasure to me to have it in my power to make some return for this lady's goodness, by carrying



a letter from her to her brother, who was a prisoner in Sweden.

Beech is the species of timber most common in Fünen, as in all the Danish isles. Oak and elder, as well as birch, ash, and willows, now and then appear, but neither in great numbers, nor of considerable size.

Fünen is certainly not sufficiently sheltered by wood; though I had been told in Jutland, that it had rather too much than too little timber. None good for shipbuilding has as yet been found; and I doubt if there be much in this country.

In the southern divisions of the island, I am told that green crops, pease and beans, are raised, but along the road which I have travelled, no symptoms of such husbandry were seen. The general appearance of Fünen resembles that of the worst part of Wiltshire, or of Champagne Poulleuse in France.

Fünen is stated to have a population of 150,000 souls, which is nearly that of the second rate counties in England and Ireland. It contains several noblemen's estates and family seats, but I have seen none distinguished for size or elegance.

---

## LETTER VIII.

*Nijborg, Nyburg, or Nyeborg, Dec. 28th and 29th.*

WE arrived here about two yesterday afternoon, after a three hours' drive; but as the town is a kind of fortress, and the government is uncommonly timid and cautious, we are not allowed to go about the place, or to make any visits. A guard attends every one of us who leaves his room; and though the guard is good humoured and civil, indeed uncommonly so, the restraint is unpleasant.

Nijborg is a pleasant little town, containing eighteen hundred souls, besides military, and has the appearance of being wealthy. This may in some measure be owing to the newness of the houses, the greatest part of which have been built since the year 1804, when a terrible fire destroyed nearly the whole of the place.

The situation of Nijborg, on a finely wooded bay upon

the Great Belt, which divides Fünen from Zeeland, is advantageous as well as beautiful. At this season every place appears in dishabille; the rivers and lakes are frozen over; the ships are locked up in ice, and make a contemptible figure; the fields look bare and barren; the trees leafless, melancholy, and shrivelled; and, to crown all, the animal world corresponds with the inanimate creation, and man sympathizes so strongly with the gloomy phenomena which he beholds, that his heart is shut against pleasurable impressions, and recognizes nothing of nature but her mysterious sublimity, and the terrors of her power.

Such were my feelings as I approached a town, which, in point of situation, I am convinced is in summer delightful. The commandant was polite and attentive, and, to my great gratification, praised some British officers he has corresponded with since the beginning of this war, and especially admiral Keates, with whom he had to arrange the difficult affair of providing transports for general Romana's army.

We are ordered to hold ourselves in readiness to be ferried to Zeeland to-morrow morning at two; a cold and unpromising business.

To our great disappointment, we have learned, that, three days ago, the ice compelled all the British men of war to leave the Belts; so that it is likely we shall have some difficulty and danger in our passage.

The name of this island is scarcely by any two persons spelt alike.

After one of the most teasing and fatiguing day's work that can well be conceived, we accomplished our passage of about nineteen or twenty English miles from Nijborg to this wretched place; and though it is now ten at night of the 29th, and we have been in motion since two in the morning, we are ordered to march immediately two mortal Danish miles to a place called Slagelse.

The weather is cold to excess; and it is very likely that at the place just named, we shall have no lodgings prepared for us, although there being none here, is the pretext urged by the commanding officer for our removal.

A prisoner, travelling in winter over Danish ferries, ought to be well supplied with patience and philosophy.

## LETTER IX.

*Ringsted, or Ringstad, in Zealand, Dec. 30, 1808.*

IT was a very wise resolution of the Grecian sage, never to go by water any journey practicable by land. If the distance be small, it costs more time, more preparation, and, generally speaking, more money than if you go on dry ground; if the distance be great, you may expect to have an hundred inconveniences and privations to suffer, and these aggravated, probably, by sea-sickness, contrary winds, cheating boatmen, squalling children, squeaking pigs, filth and abominations innumerable; and, perhaps, as was our hard fortune, all of these miseries, combined with hunger, thirst, cold, and want of sleep.

On a frosty, snowy morning, the 29th of December, we were kept sitting in uncovered carts, in the open streets of Nijborg from two o'clock till six; and were then slowly marched in the aforesaid carts for an hour, in the face of a bitter north-east-wind, which threatened to freeze our very blood and marrow.

When we arrived at the place of embarkation, which was nearly three English miles from the town of Nijborg, our baggage and our persons were huddled, in the greatest disorder, on board three large sloops, already stuffed with goods, horses, cows, pigs, &c. passing from Fünen to Zealand. A guard of a corporal and six soldiers was posted in each sloop.

About eight in the morning, with infinite noise, but with all the sluggishness of so many torpedos, they at last set sail. The wind was as contrary, and the day as disagreeable, as our worst enemies could have desired. Fortunately for me, I had been careful enough to think of carrying some provisions and a little brandy with me from Nijborg; and was thus enabled to make a tolerable meal along with some of my fellow passengers. I soon, however, felt all my folly, in having entrusted the smallest trifle to the precautionary prudence of English or Danish sailors.

Alas! after dining on salted beef, ham, and bread, there was not a drop of water to be found on board. The shock which this discovery gave us may be easily conceived by any one who considers that each vessel contained nearly eighty persons, and that we had the prospect of being all

day, or perhaps two days, on the passage. I had only the poor consolation left me of scolding the sailors. They bore my ill-humour very well, and endeavoured to excuse their carelessness, by alleging that it would be impossible to keep water on board without freezing. They had themselves neither meat nor drink, excepting a bottle of Danish whiskey or gin; which they drank, as they called it, *dry, i. e.* without any mixture. My brandy was now useless to me, as I cannot drink any unless diluted with water, and I was consequently compelled to endure all the horrors of thirst during the nine hours of our painful voyage.

Our vessels had a crust, or rather a solid hoop, of ice two feet high, and a foot thick, all round their hulls, where the waves broke on them. The sea, luckily for us, was very calm, otherwise we should have been dreadfully annoyed by its spray dashing upon the decks, and being instantly converted into ice.

The coast of Fiinen, Zeeland, Langeland, Sprøe, and of all the land in sight, is rather tame than bold; but the trees, windmills, and church spires, which, in every direction, seem to bound the horizon, give some variety and beauty to the scene. There was no ice, excepting a few floating pieces, not above three or four inches thick, and a few square yards in dimensions, which we met with when we had left the shore half an English mile.

There is a pretty strong current; and, what makes these currents in the Baltic and the Cattegat worse than those of our British seas, however stronger the latter may be, is, that they depend upon the winds, and not, like our British currents, upon any steady and known principle. Of their strength and continuance, the sailors have very little knowledge; much less indeed than from their influence upon a voyage, and the usual information which the dullest of mankind derive from daily experience, we should be led to expect.

The master of the sloop described to me the usual mode of sending post letters and passengers over this Belt in severe winters. The description is enough to make one shudder with horror.

The distance across the narrowest part of the Great Belt is so considerable, it being betwixt eighteen and nineteen miles, that very few instances occur in history of a passage being effected over the ice by persons on foot. The ferrymen, therefore, are supplied with what they call ice-boats, or good stout common built boats, well fastened with iron, and furnished with iron keels, or at least keels strongly armed



with that metal. These boats are dragged by the men, like any other sledge, over those parts of the strait which are completely frozen, and where the ice is of the requisite smoothness and strength. These spots are, however, comparatively few. In consequence of currents, eddies, or strong winds, and greater depth of water in some places than in others, the boatmen frequently sink down into large holes in the ice, and are hauled into the boat by means of ropes, which are fastened round their shoulders. But it sometimes happens that this cannot be easily done, and that two or more pieces of ice are driven with such force against each other, by the current and winds, that the unfortunate boatmen are squeezed to death, or drowned, before they have time to regain the boat. In other parts, large sheets of ice, several yards in extent, and often ten or twelve feet high, raised edgeways by strong winds, oppose a dreadful barrier to all further progress. The boat must now be raised in the best way they can, by means of ice-poles, handspikes, and oars, to the summit of the icy elevation, and precipitated to the opposite side. This is the most dangerous part of the whole operation, because that the large masses of ice are often very insecurely bound together, and have interstices of water, snow, or thin ice, between them. To secure themselves as well as possible against the fatal treachery of the rough, uneven ice, the boatmen use ice-poles, which they drive with all their might into the rough pavement under their feet, to ascertain its strength.

All their precautions are, nevertheless, frequently unavailing. Should a gale, or a north-west wind, start up when they are about mid-way, their fate becomes almost inevitable. Huge fields of ice are then at once detached from the great mass which borders the shores of Fünen and Zeeland, and are tossed against each other with inconceivable fury by the contending currents, until after a struggle of days or weeks, they find their way into the Baltic or Cattegat, according to the direction of the conquering wind. Destruction awaits any ship or boat involved among these enraged combatants: and, accordingly, the number of melancholy accidents that every severe winter produces is prodigious.

The exertion requisite for accomplishing the passage often proves too great, and the boatmen, though they have not met with any unexpected incident peculiarly unfavourable, perish from cold and fatigue. The fare paid them is proportionally high, and varies with the various situations in which they are placed. The ordinary number of boatmen

is eight, but they are frequently obliged to take as many as their boat can carry.

When I asked some of our boatmen, who were accustomed to this hazardous sort of navigation, whether they thought it practicable for an army to cross the Great Belt in a rigorous season, they answered, with seeming earnestness of conviction, "Sir, the wind must be calm for weeks together, and the frost more intense than any of us ever saw, before one hundred men can pass in arms; and as to cavalry and artillery, they are out of the question: nor is this all; for should one hundred men succeed in their attempt to cross, ten men meeting them on the opposite shore could kill them like so many sheep, so fatiguing is the journey, even to the stoutest and most experienced."

How absurd then were the speeches of so many of our politicians, who declared, in the most confident manner, that Zeeland would be untenable by the British army in winter! Nothing could be more puerile and ridiculous than such an idea.

The very great difficulties which, for five or six months in the year, attend the passage between the different Danish provinces and isles, may be considered as one of the principal impediments to agricultural and economical improvements. The situation of this monarchy for trade is so pre-eminently excellent, her coasts are so extensive, her harbours so numerous, and, it must also be acknowledged, her population is so orderly, and her government so mild and patriotic, that we are at a loss to account for the slender advances in internal and external resources, which she has made during the last hundred years.

What renders more striking this pause, or, more correctly speaking, retrograde movement in national prosperity, is, that since the year 1718 she has carried on no war of any consequence.

There must surely, at bottom, be some sore evil connected with her climate, soil, produce, and cultivation, to account for this blighting of Denmark's political tree. May not the cause, perhaps, be traced to the deadly stagnation of the Baltic winter, the disjointed state of the provinces, and the extreme difficulty of intercommunication? What inconveniences would Britain not be subject to, were Middlesex, Kent, and Essex, with the navigation of the Thames (and these form the Zeeland of England) cut off from all intercourse with the rest of the united kingdom for nearly the half of the year? Nay, would not a Little and a Great Belt,

such as I have described, dissevering Yorkshire and Lancashire (the Fünen of England), or Norfolk and the corn counties (our Holstein and Jutland), from the rest of the nation, be followed by most fatal consequences to our general resources !

The island of Sprøe, which is somewhat bolder than the others in sight, is a kind of a half-way house on this wide ferry, and yields to many a miserable passenger a welcome shelter in winter, and during the continuance of contrary winds. We did not land. The information which I received respecting it from the captain of our sloop was by no means favourable. It seems to be a place of such wretched accommodation, though containing a kind of royal inn and hotel, that a residence on it is become a proverbial expression, used as our Highlanders do "*Droch comhail ort* ;"—Evil befall you. "May you be detained a day and two nights at Sprogø," is tantamount to wishing a man the speediest road to the gallows.

The island, however, is a relief to the eye on a broad passage ; and, though not seemingly above a mile in length, and half as much in breadth, is of great service, on account of its position.

We were politely received at Corsøer, by the person to whom the marine department of that abominable village is entrusted. He promised to procure us lodgings and accommodation for the night ; a very comfortable promise to us, as few persons living could stand more in need of them. His promises, however, we quickly found to be of the courtier sort. We waited till nine in the evening before we could procure even a dinner.

My companions, at length, began to grumble at the delay, and at the shameful breach of promise about our lodgings. For my own part, I had, by this time, learned a little philosophy. I begged of them to recollect that we were fortunate in not having died of thirst, and that we ought to be thankful we had not before us the prospect of any more long Danish ferries ; that the sooner we were at our journey's end the better ; that we had now only eighty miles to go ; with other similar topics of consolation. All this had a good effect upon them, as well as upon myself.

At half past ten at night, we set off in twenty-two carts for Slagelse, leaving behind us only one of our number (and a servant with him), who was unable to bear the fatigue of travelling. It was a bitter cold night, but we drove rapidly, and got to our stage by one in the morning. The people of

the village had all gone to bed many hours before our arrival, and it was a long and painful business to get admittance into any house.

I slept pretty comfortably on a chair the remainder of the night, and on waking in the morning, discovered a fresh and pleasing instance of female humanity. The landlady having observed me retire to an adjoining room, from the noise and confusion of the room in which my fellow travellers drank coffee, and not seeing me return, suspected, what was in fact the case, that I had laid me down in the first convenient spot for sleeping. I had taken possession of an arm chair, a valuable property in my situation. She found me fast asleep, and wrapped me carefully up in pillows and cloaks (no blankets are used in Denmark), and put one of her warmest handkerchiefs and a cap on my head. I awoke in the morning in good health, and greatly refreshed, and felt very grateful to the unknown person who had so kindly arrayed me in my grotesque, but comfortable, habiliments. A man, I was convinced, would not have done it. When, in the morning, I discovered and thanked her, she answered, "I only did my duty, sir. Perhaps you have at home a mother, wife, or sister, who, in my situation, would do just the same for a prisoner, and who will wish me well when you tell them that we Danish women have female hearts, like our sex in other countries."

This woman had lost a brother in the action between the Danes and sir Arthur Wellesley's army, near Kiøge, in 1807.

Slagelse, like almost all the Danish villages I have lately seen, suffered severely, some years ago, by fire; it is consequently rebuilt in a better, or at least a newer style than the general run of small villages. Its population is between seventeen and eighteen hundred. The place is in other respects insignificant.

Here we were detained this morning from eight, the hour we were ordered to be ready for setting off, till one in the afternoon, merely because the dragoons who escorted us had forgotten their duty. It was very provoking, that the fellows were not punished further than by a very gentle reprimand, accompanied by a sort of request from their officer, not to keep us so long waiting again.

The country is, through the whole of the route, poorer and worse cultivated than Fünen, and the better parts of Jutland over which I have travelled. The enclosures are pitiful, and extremely neglected; the villages are few, small, and composed of huts, miserable indeed, in comparison



with those of Holstein, Jutland, and Sleswig, and the finer parts of Germany; the soil is moorish or sandy; and, upon the whole, is ill-managed; the woods look much better upon a distant than a near inspection, though some good beech-trees, and a few tolerable oaks, now and then appear.

Almost all the peasants' houses are of wood, painted red, green, or yellow, raised on foundations of granite blocks, to the height of a foot and a half from the ground; betwixt which blocks and the wooden parts of the walls the wind has free entrance into three-fourths of the dwelling. The windows are small, and mostly glazed with glass panes of a blueish tinge.

Ringsted, where I now write, lies on a commanding eminence, nineteen miles from Slagelse, and in a central part of the island of Zeeland. It is a still poorer place than Slagelse, and scarcely deserves any mention, excepting for the good accommodation which the post-office, near the church, affords. The last-mentioned edifice would, I think, be too large for the village of Ringsted, were all the horses, cows, and pigs of the place, as well as the human population, to become good church-going Lutherans. The magnitude of this church struck me the more forcibly, because the people of this country do not seem very zealous devotees; but, on the contrary, pay at least to the external observances of religion very little attention. They buy and sell, and amuse themselves on Sundays, as on other week days, and very few of them frequent the churches, especially in the towns.

This observation I made some years ago, and have reason to think it well founded, not only in comparison with Britain and Ireland, but also with Germany, Hungary, and France.

I by no means intend any unfavourable reflection on the morality of the Danish people, and still less on the piety and general conduct of their clergy, whom I believe to be an estimable order of men; all I mean is, that too little respect is paid to the Sabbath, and to the edification, which a suitable employment of that sacred day is well calculated to produce.

The Zeeland roads are most excellent; far superior indeed to the roads of almost all the countries which I have seen. At the end of every mile, and half mile, there is erected by the road side, a pillar of Norwegian granite, ten or twelve feet in height, with the letters C. VII. (Christian the seventh), and the number of the miles to Copenhagen, engraven upon it; and smaller pillars of the same material, similarly engraved, are placed at the end of the first and third quarters

of a Danish mile, all the way from Corsöer, to Copenhagen and Elsinore.

To keep in order both the high and cross roads, the peasantry are bound to labour on them a certain number of days each season, according to the valuation of their lands, under the inspection of commissioners, appointed by the commandants of the districts, and controuled by the government department entrusted with the post-offices.

That the peasants may be kept strictly to their duty, the portion of road to be repaired by each is measured, and the initials of the peasant's name are engraved upon a piece of stone or of durable wood, and fixed in the ground beside the portion of road thus allotted him. The best proof of the efficacy of this regulation, is the incomparable excellence of all these roads.

---

## LETTER X.

*Roskilde, Dec. 31, 1808.*

IN this town, which for ages has been the burial place of the Danish royal family, I conclude the year 1808, a prisoner. Little did I expect to pay it such a visit, when, half a dozen years ago, I left this melancholy place, with no intention of ever seeing it again; and little didst thou expect it, my dear, far distant friend, when on the 10th of October last, thou wert pleased to dedicate thy life to the happiness of him who loves and esteems thee.

To one who has not seen Roskilde, it must be interesting on account of what he hears of the wonderful monuments of its cathedral from every one with whom he may chance to talk upon the subject. But, to the same man, the actual inspection will prove a mortifying disappointment.

How different from the works of nature in Switzerland, Salzburgh, Hungary, and Scotland! How infinitely do the latter transcend the language and even the expectations and the glowing fancy of the traveller! How varied, yet how simple are their charms; how contrasted, yet how harmonious their features; and how astonishingly does intimate acquaintance with those charming features introduce into the

soul one grand sentiment of nature, one delicious, heart-felt conviction, that all is the effect of a power, which is at once irresistible, beneficent and sublime!

The cathedral of Roskilde is a large mass of tolerable buildings, nearly as disproportioned to the population of the poor decaying town, as is the church of Ringsted to that place. The monuments of the royal family are, upon the whole, as dull as can easily be conceived. Most of the huge coffins, containing royal personages of every description, are covered with black velvet, which is become in the course of time, so tattered as to look very unroyal and beggarly. The tassels and other ornaments appended to them fall off in rags, year after year; grow green, and in general, may be called really shabby. A considerable number, however, of the coffins are of tolerable workmanship in marble, but not one of the inscriptions deserves particular notice. This is rather mortifying, but it is a literal and not astonishing fact; for the inscriptions are sparingly used, and are very modest and uninteresting.

The marble, which is commonly called white, but is in reality, a dusky yellow, and of a disagreeable and greasy surface, is the kind uniformly used in these monuments. It is nothing like the Italian, or even the Scotch marble, in point of softness of grain, or of what we call fleshyness of colouring, and has no more effect in monuments than common freestone. The fine granite of Norway or Sweden, would have answered infinitely better.

Roskilde seems to have been long on the decline, for the houses are almost antediluvian in form and size, the streets narrow and ill laid out, and the population is scanty.

We are kept strict prisoners here, under the pretext that, as the town is full of soldiers, and a kind of battle took place in it, between the English and natives, in 1807, in which many of the latter were killed, the Danes might probably insult or maltreat any of our men, who should be seen in the streets. The reason is a frivolous and vexatious one. The Danes are not disposed to insult their prisoners, and even if they were so disposed, as the town is so full of soldiers, we might surely be allowed a guard to protect us.

I have had an unpleasant altercation on this subject, with the officer who appointed us our lodgings. In my opinion, he has behaved very improperly, and, to their honour be it said, very differently from those of his Danish brother officers with whom I have hitherto met. As this is a circumstance

likely to be productive of some consequences, I shall hereafter enlarge upon it.

---

## LETTER XI.

*Copenhagen, 1st January, 1809.*

WHILE I am anxiously waiting for an answer to a petition, which I have just transmitted to the king of Denmark, written some minutes ago, I continue my journal, and take up the narrative from the moment of arriving at Roskilde.

The distance between Ringsted and Roskilde is nineteen miles, which we were three hours and a half travelling in our carts; so that we arrived in the latter town at mid-day.

A promise was at first made us that we should be allowed to proceed, and perhaps get to Elsinore the following night; and thus finish our long and disagreeable journey on Danish land. This promise was not kept. On the contrary, we were now given to understand, that we were not only to remain at Roskilde all that day (the best too for travelling which we had yet seen), but also that twenty-eight of us must lodge, under a guard, in one small ill-aired room, on the floor of which we must sleep at night.

This information was communicated to me by the officer who seemed to take the direction of every thing concerning us; and it was given in rough and insolent language. I asked him if he spoke German? He did fluently.

As a knowledge of that language, is, throughout all the north, a sort of criterion to distinguish persons of education, and as I had hitherto found it very useful, I had no doubt of prevailing upon the officer just mentioned, either to permit us to go forward, or to allow us to walk through the town; or, at least, to have the use of rooms and beds in our prison, where there was an abundance of empty ones.

In all this I was mistaken. He took it highly amiss that I seemed dissatisfied with any thing he chose to do, and asked me, if I suspected him to be ignorant of his duty?

[Here the author relates a serious dispute, which took place between him and the commander, which ended in his being sent prisoner to Copenhagen; from which situation,



however, he was released on petitioning the king of Denmark. In the following letter he gives an interesting account of the state of the Danish capital].

---

## LETTER XII.

*Elsinore, January 5, 1809.*

AFTER reposing myself in Copenhagen, and comparing its present state with what it was at the period of my last visit in 1804, I came by the way of Hirschholm to this place. The Sound is so full of floating ice, that a passage is impracticable. I have, therefore, leisure for writing what has occurred to me on the present state of Zeeland, Copenhagen, and Denmark: These I shall notice in their order.

### I. Zeeland.

This island has for many past ages been the most important division of the Danish monarchy. It contains the metropolis, the court, the fleet, and the courts of justice: it is the grand emporium of the trade, shipping, and manufactures of the kingdom; and by its geographical position, it essentially influences the trade of northern Europe.

Zeeland lies between latitude  $54^{\circ} 55'$  and  $54^{\circ} 52'$  north, and longitude 11 and 13 of Greenwich. It possesses twelve excellent harbours, and an innumerable quantity of smaller bays and creeks, well calculated for promoting its internal trade, its ship-building, and its fisheries and manufactures. The most moderate computation fixes its circumference, following the sea-mark, at eight hundred and fifty miles. Its extreme length is eighty English miles, and the average breadth forty. It is intersected in various places by arms of the sea, so that the solid extent of the island does not exceed eighty miles by thirty-six, or 2880 square miles, equal to 1,440,000 Scottish, or 1,843,200 English acres. Of this extent, nearly equal to our counties of Perth or Northumberland, about one-fourth is covered with wood, or at least allotted to woods; one-fourth is moor, marsh, or barren

heath, and one half is cultivated, pastured, or turned to account in roads, cities, towns, villages, farm-houses, gardens, parks, and other economical purposes. The soil is of middling quality, rather sandy, but susceptible of very great amelioration, by draining, enclosing, trenching, and, above all, by introducing a judicious rotation of crops, and an interchange of the leguminous and culmiferous.

The population of Zeeland varies so much, in consequence of its being liable to the fluctuations occasioned by the presence or absence of the fleets and armies, that it is impossible to state it with precision. It seldom, however, exceeds 260,000 or falls under 220,000; the average may be fixed at 235,000, its army and navy included.

Were we, therefore, to deduct from this number the population of Copenhagen, which, being the metropolis not of Zeeland only, but of the whole monarchy, is accordingly peopled for the most part with Norwegians, Holsteiners, Jutlanders, Swedes, &c. this island would be found to contain no more than about 140,000 souls. The surface affords ten Scotch acres, or twelve and a half English acres to each individual! a proportion disgraceful to the Zeeland farmers, considering the numerous local advantages which they possess.

In a political point of view, this island deserves much attention. It will always be, in the real sense of the expression, the key of the Baltic. It is in vain to urge, that in the hands of Denmark, which now possesses no fleet, this key is useless, or null: our fleets and convoys have lately, to their cost, felt the contrary\*. In the possession of Great Britain, however, Zeeland would be complete mistress of the Baltic, of its trade, its powers, its resources, its foreign relations, and of all its political influence.

Convinced as I am of the truth of what I have now advanced, and certain, as I have already stated, that no enemy could drive us out of it by armies marched across the ice; and having, moreover, undoubted information from persons on the spot, that nine-tenths of the lower orders of the natives wish to have us for their fellow-citizens, or if you please,

---

\* One fleet of sixty-three sail had twenty-two valuable vessels taken from it by the Danes of Zeeland a month ago, during a calm, when the ships of war that formed the convoy were not only useless, but ran a great risk of being taken themselves by the enemy's gun and row-boats. The number of prizes carried into Zeeland since we evacuated it, is believed to amount to three hundred and fifty-six; and it will continue to grow more and more formidable as long as the war lasts.

their masters, I am grieved and astonished at our having evacuated this important island, after its conquest in 1807. Our attack on Copenhagen had completely alienated the government, and thrown the resources of the country, and, I may add, its national pride, its feelings of injustice, and thirst for revenge, into the arms of France. All that we could do to ensure the hatred of Denmark and Russia, was done previously to the capitulation of Copenhagen, and the surrender of the fleet. The morality or immorality, the political expediency or folly of the transaction, were decided for ever, and honour or disgrace indelibly attached to the British councils of the day. As their reason for attacking an unsuspecting and defenceless ally, those councils supported their cause by alleging a political necessity, founded upon no less important considerations than the danger or the security of Britain.

Now, if it was necessary for our safety that Zeeland should be taken, and its fleet carried off, I really see no cause why Zeeland should not have been kept, to prevent the creation of future fleets, for the equipment of which she possesses such peculiar facilities and advantages. Have we not by our conduct incurred all the shame of robbery without securing its gains? Have we not risked our reputation, and then rejected the prize; committed the trespass, and wantonly thrown away the object for which it was committed?

Considering the scarcity of fuel, and the consequent dearth of it in Zeeland, a stranger is surprized at the number and extent of the woods. These are guarded by royal edicts, and what is better, by royal and manorial foresters, who manage the timber under strict regulations. The quality of the oak for ship-building is much praised by the natives; but these praises must be received with some allowance for the uncommon self-complacency with which every Dane mentions the productions of his own country. The quantity of oak, however, is considerable, and that of beech, of every size and of all ages, is very great.

A well-informed gentleman, intimately acquainted with the island, estimates the value of the woods in Zeeland, were they now sold by auction, at five millions of dollars, or nearly one million sterling. He thinks that they can afford sufficient quantities of timber for building *four* ships of the line annually, without any serious injury, for fifty years to come.

Granting that this gentleman's patriotism may have misled him so far, as to make him exaggerate one-third in this cal-

culatation, yet still, what an advantage would accrue to us from the possession! In our hands the soil, the horses and cattle, and indeed every thing, would be prodigiously improved in quality, and increased in numbers. The population would not only raise grain enough for its own consumption, but also be able to export to Norway and Sweden. The resources of the island, with the Sound dues, amounting annually to 120,000 pounds sterling, and capable of being fairly raised to 200,000 without any sensible burden on the general commerce connected with it, would not only support an army sufficient for its defence, but also add considerably to our naval and military power.

I do not mention minor considerations, which must be obvious to the silliest cabin-boy who passes the Sound; such as the advantage which will arise to trade from the reduction of the present high rate of insurance, the facility of conveying British commodities into Germany, Prussia, and Russia, and thence over the continent; the additional number of voyages which vessels from Britain would make to the Baltic, had we possession of Zeeland, and the early supply of Baltic productions in spring, by vessels wintering at Copenhagen and Elsinore.

It must, doubtless, be acknowledged, that we have so many points to attack or defend, so many fine islands to take or to keep, from Sicily to Canada, and from Botany Bay to Brazil, that it requires no small degree of patriotic avarice to advise the British government to make any new conquests whatever. It is added by the advocates of the evacuation, that, were we to keep Zeeland, we must expect to encounter the perpetual jealousy, if not the actual hostility, of Russia, Prussia, Denmark, and even of the free towns, and of Sweden, our present ally; and that, in the event of future wars with France, we must lay our account with their joint opposition, as well as with the ill-will and rancour of all the commercial world.

To these objections I have no occasion to oppose any labour-ed arguments. Of all the islands which we have ever possessed, beyond the limits of the united kingdom, Zeeland is by much the most important. The possession of it I should, in the present state of Europe, consider not as a matter of option, but of *downright necessity*. Unless we possess it, we cannot possibly carry on our commerce in the north either with dignity or security. As to the enmity and ill-will of other nations, we have one melancholy consolation left us, which is, that they no longer admit of increase. Our prosperity



and power must always draw upon us the jealousy of those nations; and between commercial jealousy and national hatred the distinction is not worth drawing. Candour will also whisper to every enlightened Briton, that his countrymen are at no pains to soften to other nations the consciousness of their inferiority, but, on the contrary, too often display the insolence of power, if not in violent and cruel actions, yet with equal malignancy of effect, by unaccommodating manners, and by using the language of scorn, and contempt. To stand in want of Zeeland, therefore, out of a mere punctilious desire of obtaining European popularity, in 1809, is extremely ludicrous in Mr. John Bull; and, what is worse, nobody will give him credit for any delicate or polite attention to the feelings of others. All the world cries aloud: "He ran away from Zeeland, because he was afraid of being kicked out."

I shall only add on this melancholy subject, that had we kept possession of that queen of Danish isles, the fertile and beautiful adjacent ones of Moen, Falster, and Laaland, must have followed in her train. They contain a population of 25,000 or 30,000 souls, and can furnish four thousand excellent seamen to our fleet.

## II. *Copenhagen.*

From my former residence in Copenhagen, and the short stay made in it this week, as well as the many conversations which I have at different periods held about it with natives and foreigners, I can tolerably well answer the ordinary questions put to travellers respecting cities; and yet I do not think, that were I to attempt an elaborate description, a man who had never seen the place would receive any distinct or new idea of it from my words. Suffice it, therefore, to say, that it is, upon the whole, one of the handsomest cities of northern Europe; and, in proportion to its extent, contains fewer houses that can be reckoned mean or paltry than any town in the world. The population, according to the return made in 1806, was 95,000 souls. It has fluctuated between 84 and 100,000 for the last twelve years. At present it is probably under 90,000.

The city is almost all built of bricks, of very good construction. There is not, perhaps, a single house in Copenhagen two hundred years old, and indeed most of them are not fifty. This, and the circumstance above mentioned, of there being few shabby buildings within its walls, arises

from the two dreadful misfortunes which it has suffered, viz. the conflagrations of 1728 and of 1794. In 1728, no less than sixteen hundred and fifty houses were burnt to ashes, besides churches and other public buildings, and a great number of houses were much damaged; and in 1794 between nine hundred and a thousand buildings were completely destroyed, including the stupendously magnificent palace of Christiansburg.

In travelling through Denmark, we are perpetually reminded of the tremendous devastations of fire; and yet we can perceive no particular precautions adopted by government, or by incorporated public bodies, for preventing their recurrence. Not a season passes without several instances of these calamities; and what is deplorable, they become every year more frequent.

Copenhagen is well known to be one of the finest harbours in Europe. Ships of the line are moored in the heart of the city, and have their bowsprits above the windows of the houses. At present, indeed, this peculiarity is wanting. The fleet is gone, and the view is dismal to those who once saw the harbour and arsenal in Denmark's better days.

Most of the houses are spaciously built, with four complete stories, besides sunk cellars and garrets. The only peculiarity in the mode of building which strikes a stranger, is the new method of turning the corners of rectangular streets. It is a very judicious and convenient one in a crowded capital. Instead of the usual right angles formed by the corners of the houses, at the extremities or divisions of streets, the builders of Copenhagen have squared them off in a semi-octangular form, and thereby secured various advantages. Carriages and horses cannot so frequently run foul of each other, or run down persons on foot at the turnings of the streets; the space gained gives a free circulation of air, and the look of as many handsome squares as there are street-divisions in the city.

There is one street, which, on account of its uncommon grandeur, every stranger should visit, viz. Amalien-Gade, and the square at the west end of it. In this square the king dwells; and three other palaces, with their wings, along with his majesty's palace, form the whole of it. One of the palaces is allotted to the education and lodging of young navy cadets; the other two are usually occupied by different members of the royal family.

This square would be reckoned handsome in any city in the world. In the middle of it is an equestrian statue of

Frederick the Fifth, which, I am informed, cost ten times more than what one would reasonably calculate as its value. But such accounts are always exaggerated in this country, and perhaps in all other countries; and we should, therefore, not be disgusted at the improbability of them. The statue is a public ornament, and that is enough. No matter whether it cost twenty or eighty thousand pounds.

A stranger will naturally ask some unpleasant questions on seeing the marble church, or rather the marble ruins, towards the eastern end of this street. This church was begun many years ago, and large sums of money were expended upon it. The walls, inside and outside, were all to be of polished Norwegian marble, and the whole was to be finished in a style of magnificence becoming the Danish capital and monarchy.

I had the curiosity to measure one of the marble blocks intended as part of a front pillar. It was hewn and polished, and was nine feet in diameter, and twenty-seven in circumference! being part of a Corinthian pillar, the height of that pillar, to make it in due proportion to its diameter, must, pedestal and capital included, have been intended to be about *ninety feet*!

It was natural to ask why those huge blocks, which must have cost immense sums of money before they were brought to their present state, are allowed to lie scattered over the church-yard, and why the church itself is left half, or one-third, unfinished, a disgrace to the metropolis and to the country. I received the same answer as in 1804, "The foundation cannot bear the weight; the ground is deficient!" I suspect this should have been said of the money rather than the ground.

Supposing, however, that this church were finished according to the plan intended, I do not believe that the light grey marble would look better than our common free-stone. How much is a traveller deceived and disappointed by the sound of marble churches and marble houses! He who loves marble may go to Salzburgh, and learn to correct his fancy.

As it is not my plan to attempt a description of Copenhagen, or even of its principal buildings, I shall content myself with mentioning such things as are particularly interesting, and may prove useful to other travellers after me.

Let every traveller, on arriving here, pay his first visit to the observatory.

This grand pile was built by Frederick V. for a disciple of Tycho Brahe. It is a hundred and thirty feet high, and

about seventy feet in diameter; unquestionably one of the finest cylinders in the world. You can drive up in a carriage to within twenty or twenty-five feet of the top, by the large winding stair-case, or rather road of brick, which runs from the floor to the door of the rooms where the astronomical apparatus is kept. From these rooms you have a most agreeable and extensive prospect. The city of Copenhagen, with its beautiful spires, its numerous canals, vessels, and elegant streets, is spread like a map under your eyes. The isle of Amak, which is the kitchen garden of the city, and was peopled by a Flemish colony in the sixteenth century, who still retain their old dress, and many of their peculiar customs, stretches to the south in all the beauty of industry, and the gaiety of verdure.

To the eastward, may distinctly be discerned the white-washed cottages on the island of Saltholm. Your eye follows the Swedish coast for thirty miles, from Malmoe to Landskrona or Landscrona, of which last city, though at the distance of twenty-four miles, you can distinctly see not only the spires and highest houses, but even the doors and windows.

By the help of a glass, you see the remains of Tycho Brahe's hut on the island of Hween. To the northward and westward, you have a rich and charming view of the best part of Zeeland.

For paying an early visit to the observatory, you have in addition to the inducement held out by the finest prospect which it affords, another, and a very great one, in the attention and civility of the gentleman to whom it is intrusted, and in his pleasant and intelligent conversation.

From the observatory, you may go half a mile to the westward in the city, and make an agreeable use of three hours with Mr. Moldenhawer in the royal library, near the palace. The library is said to contain from two hundred and seventy to three hundred thousand volumes. It is indeed the largest I have seen, but still I think the above number an exaggeration.

There is no complete catalogue; there are many duplicates, and triplicates of books and manuscripts; and where there is such room for vagueness and uncertainty, we all know on which side the calculation turns.

The government allows three thousand dollars annually, for making new purchases, a sum which, in the present extravagant state of European book buying, is by no means adequate to the object.



Yet, to the honour of the persons who have in their hands the superintendence and application of the money, I found here many expensive works published very lately in Italy, France, Germany, and Great Britain.

Bodoni's grand edition of Virgil; the *livraisons* that have been printed in Paris, of Humboldt and Bonpland's travels in South America; and various expensive French works on mineralogy and natural history, accompanied with beautiful plates; Heyne's Homer and Virgil; Klopstock's and Wieland's works by Göschen of Leipzig; Griesbach's beautiful new testament; and Baskerville's editions, so well known amongst us, were purchased soon after their first appearance in the market, and are here at the service of the public.

But what will particularly gratify the scholar in this library, is the great number of printed and manuscript editions of the classics. An early one of Cicero de Officiis, was shewn me as remarkable.

I also found the book mentioned by Küttner, and which, too, I had seen in no other library, Salemonis ecclesie Constantiensis epiglosse ex illustrissimis collecte auctoribus, &c. It appeared to me to be of the 15th century, but it has neither date nor place of printing inserted.

The first book printed in Denmark, was in 1496, by a German, from Westphalia, and the art seems to have met with very little encouragement here for fifty years after its invention. Copenhagen has, however, lately made a good figure in printing. The large folio work, Flora Danica, and the Ruris Otia, would do honour to any country; and the four Evangelists, printed in Greek lately, are fully as beautiful as any thing done by our Foulises or Baskervilles.

Among the manuscripts, a Virgil on parchment is singularly elegant. Of missals and richly decorated religious manuscripts there is no end. A French chronicle is peculiarly distinguished by the accuracy of its figures. The bible used by the Danish missionaries at Tranquebar in India, was shewn me.

By an unaccountable stupidity, they have translated only the Old Testament, leaving in oblivion the divine morality of the Gospel!

There is an extensive collection of manuscripts in the Icelandic tongue, written between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. Contrary to my expectation, I found a considerable analogy betwixt that language and the Danish. They

were certainly of the same origin, and were once the language of one and the same people.

It is melancholy to view the decay, and to anticipate the destruction of any people. Iceland, which once contained, as I am credibly informed, half a million of inhabitants, in a high state of civilization and of comfort, is now reduced to a tenth part of that population, who are known to exist in a condition of progressive degradation, both corporeal and intellectual.

Their literature has departed, and that so totally, that the natives do not know of its former existence. The arts and sciences have abandoned their frozen coasts, and left nothing behind, but penury and ignorance, desolation and death.

Copenhagen possesses a variety of well endowed and well managed public establishments, such as an university, infirmaries, barracks, exchange, &c. : but I need not dwell on these, as they have little to distinguish them from similar establishments in other countries.

One of them is, however, conducted with a degree of humanity which reflects honour on the nation. I mean the lying-in hospital. This excellent institution is a school for medical practitioners, as well as a blessing to the country.

Within its walls are annually delivered upwards of one thousand females, of whom the proportion that dies is astonishingly small. Patients of every country, age, character, and denomination, are indiscriminately admitted, without any question being asked. If they can afford to pay for extra attendance and accommodations, they may have them at a moderate price, but what is afforded gratis, is generally deemed sufficient. The mother is received only four or five days before her time, and she may leave her child, if she pleases, in the hospital. This is frequently done by poor women who are delivered of illegitimate children.

The patient, veiled or unveiled, is received at all hours, without delay, or hesitation. Some keep their veils on the whole time of their confinement. This institution has done away completely the barbarous practice of child-murder in the Danish metropolis.

It would require a volume to detail the various public establishments, charitable institutions, and ornamental edifices of Copenhagen; but as these are nearly similar over the whole of northern Europe, they deserve no particular notice.

A pillar of Norwegian granite, erected in honour of the late king, on occasion of his granting in 1792, their freedom

to the peasants occupying the crown-lands, strikes the stranger, as simple and elegant. It stands near the western gate, and has fortunately escaped, though in the line of the fire from the town and the batteries, during the bombardment. On one side is engraved on a marble slab inserted into the granite, the following inscription, For Christian den Syvende de Danskes og Norskes Konge af eenige og taknemmelige Borgere. (To Christian the seventh, king of the Danes and Norwegians, by some grateful citizens): on the opposite side is engraved, Grundsteuen bler lagt of Frederik Kongens Son Folkets Ven, 1792. (The foundation stone was laid by Frederick the king's son, the people's friend, 1792).

I visited the theatre, twice in 1804, and once in 1809, but can say very little of the dramatic amusements of Copenhagen. On asking some of the literati here, whether they possess original tragedies and comedies in the Danish tongue, I had such vague and contradictory answers, that I soon formed my opinion, and suppressed my curiosity. The case is pretty much the same with regard to the performances of this country, in other departments of literature.

They have, it is true, some histories, replete with research and erudition, as that of Suhm, for instance; but their composition is clumsy, and their materials heavily and unskillfully arranged. This I have been told by the most enlightened and candid Danes with whom I have conversed; for I cannot pretend to judge of the literature of the nation, from my own very imperfect acquaintance with the language.

The same reason makes me pass over some names whose works are often mentioned with respect by this people, such as Baggesen the poet, madame Brun, and several others, who have attempted of late to force their language into elegance and popularity.

In the belles lettres, eloquence, and the higher poetry, however, they confess themselves far behind the four European nations.

In ship-building, I find Copenhagen almost equal to any town in England. It possesses indeed, peculiar local advantages, from its admirable harbour and canals; and these are turned to good account. The ship-builders employ heavier and more solid timbers than we do in England, *cæteris paribus*, insomuch that were two vessels of five hundred tons register to be weighed, the one in Copenhagen, and the

other in London, the Danish ship would be found nearly one hundred tons heavier than the English.

I had a long conversation to-day with a Danish gentleman, upon the expediency of his country possessing a fleet of *line of battle ships*. As usual, we finished by each of us remaining more firm in his own opinion than before.

Much, indeed, may be plausibly urged on both sides of the question; but with regard to Copenhagen being the depôt of the whole navy, I think there ought now to be but one opinion. Should this country waste its resources in building another fleet of eighteen or twenty line of battle ships, and re-establishing its navy, it will only tend to bring upon this fine city another storm similar to that of 1807.

Now that every idea of political morality, and of a balance of powers by mutual indulgence, or co-operation, is laughed at, it is idle to talk of being strong enough to defend Zeeland against Great Britain, or Holstein, and the continental provinces, against the great conterminous states; and it is equally absurd to attempt to maintain a complete independence of the great belligerent kingdoms, by straining those small resources, which, in better times, enabled Denmark to support a considerable figure in the north. She must be dragged along, and the lighter she is, the less damage will she suffer.

The question between the Danish gentleman and myself, I conceive to be reducible to the plainest rules of arithmetic.

*The Force proposed by the Dane.*

20 ships* of the line, at 70,000 <i>l.</i> each .....	£1,400,000
12 frigates of 26 to 44 guns, 32,000 <i>l.</i> each .....	384,000
20 sloops of war, of 12 to 22 guns, 15,000 <i>l.</i> each .....	300,000
20,000 sailors and marines, at 30 <i>l.</i> per man .....	600,000
60,000 infantry of the line and militia, at 20 <i>l.</i> per man .....	1,200,000
12,000 cavalry and artillerymen, at 40 <i>l.</i> per man ....	480,000
Ordnance and stores for coasts and fortresses .....	200,000

Grand total, ..... £4,564,000

The expence here stated must be incurred by a country of which the revenue never exceeded 1,200,000*l.* and whose

---

\* The expence of building the ships here mentioned, is the only part of the public military burden which is not permanent, and accordingly, I have stated it at little more than one half the gross sum which such ships cost at the present time. The wear and tear, the repairs, and the immense expenditure attending naval arsenal, will bring the sum total fully up to my statement.



present revenue is not one half of that sum ; and how dreadfully inadequate must the revenue in question appear, when we extend our view beyond the merely naval and military disbursements of the government ? How is the civil administration to be kept up, and the royal family to be supported ? But supposing we dismiss the large ships of war, which are in fact not only useless, but pernicious, as a dead weight on the country, and reduce the naval establishment to the force which reason would prompt Denmark to maintain in proportion to her wants, revenue, and population, we shall find her naval and military establishments nearly as follows : viz.

6 stout frigates, of 44 to 50 guns, 40,000 <i>l</i> . .....	£240,000
10 smaller vessels, of 8 to 20 guns, 12,000 <i>l</i> . .....	120,000
3000 sailors and marines, at 30 <i>l</i> . per man .....	90,000
20,000 infantry of the line and militia, at 20 <i>l</i> . per man	400,000
2500 cavalry and artillerymen, at 40 <i>l</i> . per man ....	100,000
Ordnance and stores for coasts and fortresses .....	100,000

---

Grand total ..... £1,050,000

Every candid man must acknowledge that this force, however inadequate to contend with Great Britain, Russia, or France, is all that Denmark, with a population of 2,500,000, and a revenue of one million two hundred thousand pounds, can afford to support.

In times of war with Britain, she not only loses her valuable East and West India trade, and colonies, but also by far the most productive branches of her internal commerce.

The excellent province of Norway is a dead weight on Denmark at present. The Sound dues, amounting at an average to one hundred and forty thousand pounds per annum, and very rarely under one hundred thousand pounds, are completely sacrificed ; and the exports of fish, iron, and wood, from the numerous ports of the monarchy, usually amounting to three millions of pounds per annum, are now estimated at *one tenth* of that sum !

The deduction into which the gentleman from Copenhagen has led me, forms a part of what I purposed to touch upon under the third head of my remarks, viz. Denmark in general.

Denmark, with Norway and Iceland, forms a surface equal to that of the British Isles, about 160,000 square miles, or 102,400,000 square acres. On comparing the works of such

statistical writers as I have been able to procure, namely, Büsching, Thaarup, Catteau, and Bertuch, with the lists which my private friends have drawn up for me, the population of the different provinces and isles appears to be nearly as follows :

Norway with its islands .....	950,000
Zeeland, including Copenhagen .....	235,000
Fünen, Langeland, and Samsøe .....	170,000
Möen, Falster, Laaland, &c. &c. ....	40,000
Jutland .....	300,000
Schleswig .....	265,000
Holstein, including Altona .....	320,000
Iceland .....	50,000
Faroe isles .....	5,000

---

Grand total ..... 2,335,000  
Or 102,400,000 English acres, 43 acres to each individual.

Most writers fix the population in round numbers, at two millions five hundred thousand, and, in consequence of the rapid increase of the Norwegian population, that number may perhaps approach pretty close to the truth. Denmark is to the great European powers, nearly in the following proportion, both in population and resources, viz.

	<i>In Population.</i>	<i>In Resources.</i>
Denmark is to Great Britain	as 1 to 7	as 1 to 35
————— France .....	— 1 to 20	— 1 to 30
————— Russia .....	— 1 to 15	— 1 to 15
————— Austria .....	— 1 to 10	— 1 to 12
————— Turkey .....	— 1 to 8	— 1 to 10
————— Spain .....	— 1 to 6	— 1 to 10

By resources, I do not mean merely the absolute revenue arising from taxes, contributions, or other means of raising money for the governments of those nations, nor their actual armed force, for these admit of endless modifications, according to the nature of their institutions and privileges, and to the character of their governors in the interim: I mean also in connection with these, the grand total of resources comprehended in the territorial, colonial, and commercial wealth, the manufacturing industry, accumulated capital, and the genius and spirit of the countries to which I have referred.

It is obvious from this comparison, that Denmark cannot possibly maintain, for any length of time, her present establishments. Her credit is already almost annihilated, and all her resources are in a rapid decline.

Her expenditure in 1807 and 1808, exceeded, each year, her income or clear revenue, as I learn from good authority, by nearly twelve millions of dollars, or two millions and a quarter, sterling, and her revenue is daily diminishing, and indeed, must continue to decline during a war with Great Britain.

The exchange upon Hamburgh, usually at par, is now rather more than one hundred per cent. against her, and is daily falling.

The officers of the navy and army, find their pay reduced to one half, by the depreciation of the paper money issued by government, and that at a time when, in consequence of the badness of the seasons and the pressure of a disastrous war, every necessary of life is at double the common price.

The peasantry are disgusted by the burthen of public carriages on government account; the mercantile and manufacturing classes are ruined by the billeting of soldiers upon them; the clergy like other annuitants, are injured by the fall of the real value of money, and by the general distress, which they are peculiarly called upon by their profession to observe, and to alleviate; the other learned professions, chiefly supported by the opulent or litigious, must equally share in the universal calamity. The nobility have, upon the whole, but little influence in Denmark. They too are deprived of two-thirds of their revenues by the change in the value of money, and by the sacrifices which the war demands.

It may appear paradoxical, after this gloomy account of the present state of the Danish monarchy, to assert, that its ruler still possesses advantages, which, in spite of the difficulties that surround his throne, might save himself and his country.

These I now proceed to state, with the candour and love of truth, which, I am conscious, have hitherto guided my pen.

The first and firmest support of a government is the love of the people. In no country in Europe (some parts of the Austrian empire, perhaps excepted), have I seen such active and devoted patriotism, as in Denmark, between 1795 and 1805; and the same temper continues still to prevail, in as far as the king is personally concerned. All the unpopular

measures adopted by the government are imputed to the cabinet ministers; the king is never, for a moment, suspected of having any share in them. The present prince got the credit of all his father's mild and popular regulations, such as the abolition of vassalage, and of many galling services to which the peasantry on the crown-lands were formerly subjected; the introduction of districtal courts of arbitration, which greatly facilitate the decision of law-suits, and prevent or abridge litigation; and the abolition of slavery in the Danish colonies.

Much of the public favour which he acquired as crown prince still remains; and notwithstanding his excessive partiality for his military establishment, to which he is known to sacrifice many important interests of his people, they still feel for his person, the warmest affection and attachment of which they are capable.

It is not, however, merely in the love of his people, that the king of Denmark is to look for the salvation of his throne. The country possesses many great advantages, peculiar to itself.

The public burdens have hitherto been moderate, and the public debt a mere trifle. In point of physical situation, Denmark is peculiarly favoured beyond the conterminous states.

Her coast is extensive beyond all proportion to her territory, that of Norway, the isles and the continental provinces, exclusively of Iceland, being calculated at eight thousand English miles, and that prodigious coast comprehends many hundreds of harbours.

In consequence of its local position, the kingdom has been for ages a considerable maritime and mercantile power, and has possessed the most lucrative species of employment, the carrying and transit trade.

This has given to a considerable portion of the population some wealth, and a propensity for a seafaring life. There are not, perhaps, in Europe, hardier or steadier seamen than the Norwegians and Jutlanders; and indeed, if we except the British, no nation can pretend to surpass Denmark in the capability of making a good figure at sea, in proportion to her population and resources. While she possesses Zeeland, and consequently the key of the Baltic, it will always be the interest of the other European and American powers to keep on good terms with her, and as she has, upon the whole, enjoyed, for many years past, a mild, impartial,

and virtuous administration, those powers found it their interest to support her.

The same inducement to preserve her independence and integrity, still exists.

After all that has passed betwixt her and ourselves, it will be difficult perhaps to point out any other power in whose hands we ought to place Norway, Zeeland, and the passage into the Baltic, after taking them from Denmark. What is true of us, holds good as to all the other European powers.

The benefits resulting from the very excellent natural situation of this country for foreign and domestic commerce, must not be thrown into the possession of a preponderating or dangerous power; and on the other hand, they are so great and various of themselves, as to confer importance and dignity upon any country that happens to enjoy them.

In the present unhappy situation of the world, when every bond of political decency and expediency is relaxed or broken; when caprice, passion, or revenge, and a blind fury, seem to dictate to the different governments the conduct which they adopt, in direct opposition to the best interests of their constituents, the motives now started for the preservation of Denmark may have no weight; but this delirium of political fever cannot be of long continuance.

Let the Danish government return to its old habits and connexions, abandon the idea of shining as a military state, renew its amicable relations with Britain, even at the risk of Buonaparte's vengeance, and the temporary deprivation of Jutland and the German provinces; and she may yet retrieve her late misfortunes, and continue to exist as an independent nation.

In possession of Norway, Zeeland, and the Isles, she will be a respectable power, both on account of her commanding natural position, so often mentioned, and likewise of the character of her people.

The Norwegians are unquestionably as virtuous, brave, and worthy a people as any in the world. Their country cannot be attacked with advantage by any enemy; or, in other words, its conquest will cost more than the result of such conquest can benefit the captors.

The natives of Zeeland and the other isles, though not so well liked by us, or perhaps by their neighbours, as the Norwegians, are much the same in point of civilization, activity, and wealth, as the other Northern Europe tribes; but they have in a conspicuous degree the spirit of nation-



ality and patriotism, which is so effectual a support of national independence.

In all these advantages, to which Denmark has a peculiar claim, we perceive a powerful preservative amidst her present alarming symptoms of decay ; and every impartial philanthropist must wish that it may prove effectual.

---

### LETTER XIII.

*Helsingborg, in Sweden, Jan. 12, 1809.*

AFTER a tedious detention of eight days by the drifted ice, which occasionally filled the Sound between Elsinore and this place, I contrived to cross to-day by means of an ice-boat, and by the active aid of six stout Danish seamen. The distance is only three English miles and a half, but it took us six hours to effect the passage. The description which I have already given of the winter passages across the Great Belt, exactly applies to what I have this day experienced. These voyages are, indeed, in the highest degree difficult and precarious.

Being now on Swedish ground, I feel myself at full liberty to write what I please, without any dread of being persecuted for my opinions, or of being deprived of my papers. A ludicrous incident, which occurred yesterday, convinces me of the value of such a privilege.

I had purchased in Aalborg a map of Denmark, published some years ago by Mr. Bertuch of Weimar ; and, as I travelled from the capital of north Jutland, wrote down upon the map, my route, the population of the towns through which I passed, and of those in the vicinity ; and, on a slip of paper attached to it, any thing relative to them which I considered as interesting. There was nothing more in all this than what most travellers practise. It had always been my custom to do so ; and in no country did I ever suffer any inconvenience from it. Not so, however, in Elsinore. One day, when I was gone out of the room to dress, the police officer, who accompanied me every step, discovered the map on my table, and watched me carefully with regard to it, until the day before my departure. Yesterday morning, at the usual hour, he came with a grave face into my room,

and begging my pardon with great civility, demanded my map for a few minutes, as the police must, he declared, examine every paper belonging to a prisoner before he could leave Denmark.

It was in vain to urge the absurdity of sending to the police a common map of Denmark, with nothing inserted in it, but what every school-boy could find in his geographical grammar, and what the veriest blockhead traversing the Danish provinces must learn, if he knows any thing of the language. The poor map must march to the police office. In three hours it was sent back to me with an admonition of a very serious kind; but, as I believe the admonitory message not to have been correctly delivered, I shall not repeat it.

Elsinore, which is the second city in Zeeland, usually contains about five thousand seven hundred inhabitants; but at present, perhaps, not above four thousand. It has a good deal of trade in time of peace, and is in summer and autumn one of the most bustling little towns in Europe. The castle of Cronborg is merely an old palace fortified, of no great strength towards the land, and liable to be bombarded from the sea; at least the real castle, to which the steeple and telegraph are attached, is so. The place might be fortified in a manner that would render it impregnable on the sea-side; but to do this would take time, and occasion a considerable expence.

The number of ships that have passed the Sound, commonly called here Oresund, has been, *communibus annis*, during the last twelve or fourteen years, from ten to twelve thousand, and the dues have fluctuated between 100,000*l.* and 150,000*l.* sterling.

The distance from Elsinore point, where the furthest sentry-box and cannon stand, to the nearest spot in Sweden, is three English miles and a quarter; so that there is room enough for vessels to pass through it with a fair wind, in spite of the batteries on both sides. Ships sailing at the rate of five or six knots an hour have little to fear from cannon at the distance of above a mile and a half from them. As the batteries of Elsinore and Helsingborg are nearly opposite to each other, they can only continue to annoy a ship in her passage for a few minutes, provided she have a good breeze. The common depth of the water is from four and a half to seven fathoms; but near Elsinore it is in some places twelve or fourteen. The tide is quite irregular, being entirely dependent upon the winds either of the North Sea or the Baltic, or the collision of both. I am persuaded it never rises above

two or three feet, excepting on extraordinary occasions, when it has sometimes been known to exceed five or six. What renders the navigation of the Baltic particularly difficult and dangerous in stormy weather is, that the winds and currents almost always drive the same way, so that, in a gale of wind, a ship on a lee-shore has not only the wind, but also the current, sometimes running at the rate of three or four knots an hour, to struggle with; and consequently little chance of escaping shipwreck.

I counted eight gun-boats in the harbour of Elsinore, and they appeared to me to be more formidable than we generally suppose. They are rowed by twenty-four oars, have heavy cannon, twenty-four pounders, in the bows and sterns, and can carry from fifty to seventy armed men. In Copenhagen there are about sixty of them, which, in calm weather, can always sally out, for the purpose of annoying any convoys that may chance to come nigh the coast.

On the 7th of this month, I was witness to a distressing scene between Cronborg castle and a Swedish man of war brig, which, having stuck fast in a field of ice, was drifted along the Sound towards the north. The castle fired at the ship; and the ship, finding no attention paid to her on striking her colours, returned the fire with much gallantry and coolness. We could see the captain of the Swedish ship, Captain Dryer, walk up and down his quarter-deck, giving orders to his men with as much *sang-froid* as if he had been at a review. At last, the Danes became ashamed of their cruelty, in firing at a ship in distress, and suspended the cannonade from the castle. The Wenta Litet, the Swedish brig, instantly ceased firing also, after having thrown seventeen shot into the town and castle; one of these hit the gallows near the town, and two of them struck the roofs of houses close to my lodgings.

The animosity betwixt the two countries is greater than I had conceived possible, considering the long duration of peace between them—a great misfortune to both.

A stranger must be a good deal struck with the difference of appearance which the people, and more especially the military, exhibit on each side of the Sound. The Swedes have, in general, sallow complexions, dark skins, discontented faces, a melancholy drawling accent, are fond of yellow and blue colours, and are a tall, athletic-looking race of men. The soldiers have all great coats of blue cloth, with yellow facings, and long necks, which hang down to the small of their backs, and cover their elbows. They wear round hats,

with a long white feather in front, erect, and rather elegant, and have a brass belt round the crown, for the purpose, as it would seem, of warding off the blow of a sword. Their arms resemble those of the Danes.

The Danes, on the other hand, delight in red and purple colours, have blooming complexions, round faces of good colour, but not much expression, smooth good skins, talk in a barking Buchan, or Aberdeenshire accent, and are neither so tall, nor of so athletic an appearance as the Swedes. Their soldiers wear red coats, with different facings, as in England, and round or cocked hats, according to their different regiments, as in France, Germany, and Britain. The houses in Helsingborg look tolerably well, but the general appearance of the people and houses is more wealthy on the Danish side.

I feel, however, more pleasure in my change of country than ever I did in my life, and could have kissed the dust of this barren land, on my ascending the quay, so happy did I find myself in recovering my freedom.

I immediately called on our consul, Mr. F\*\*\*, who behaved to me, as he does to all his countrymen, with the utmost attention and civility. I went with him to a ball this evening, and was gratified to meet a number of well-dressed persons of each sex, who spoke English correctly, and appeared to be our friends and brothers.

This place looks at a distance much larger than it is found to be on a closer inspection. It contains about two thousand souls, has a bad harbour, a scanty trade, and is of very little importance in any point of view. The prospect from the old tower of Karna\*, above the town, is very fine and extensive, embracing a considerable portion of Zeeland, Copenhagen, Elsinore, which looks beautiful from this spot, Hamlet's palace, near Elsinore, which I forgot to visit this time, but knew that it was not worth seeing in 1804, and a great part of the Swedish coast, from the Sound to Malmoe.

The most remarkable place in the neighbourhood of Helsingborg, is Ramlösa, a watering place, whose minerals are famous over Sweden, and which, in summer, is usually frequented by great numbers of invalids, or idle fashionables from Denmark and Sweden.

Count Ruth has a colliery, and a manufactory of pottery, near this place. He is a man of spirit and enterprise, but

---

\* Karna, pronounced as the Highlanders do the word synonymous to Cairn, a heap of stones laid upon a grave.



has very up-hill work with such new manufactures and operations in this country.

Having business in Gothenburg, I purpose to set off to-morrow, in spite of the excessive severity of the weather. Fahrenheit's thermometer is now twenty-two degrees below the freezing point.

I have great reason to be pleased with the custom-house officers on both sides of the Sound ; for, contrary to my expectations, they searched my baggage with great politeness, and spoiled and tossed about nothing that belonged to me. Travellers have frequently themselves to blame for the incivility of these people, who may easily be prevented from every species of rudeness by a few gentle words, and by a discreet demeanour.

The charge of ferrying across the Sound is very high ; and, indeed, there is no wonder that it is so at this present time, for nothing can be conceived more troublesome and perilous to the boatmen. In ordinary seasons, and when the Sound is free from ice, they charge about a guinea and a half for a boat with four hands.

If I had difficulty in procuring small money in exchange for dollars in Denmark, I find tenfold difficulty, or rather impossibility, here ; for there is no coin of any kind, nor any species of currency, but paper. There are, it is true, bank-notes as low as tenpence sterling, and a great variety of notes from that value up to the sum of some hundred pounds ; but still the absolute want of a circulating metallic medium is severely felt.

Foreigners, on landing in Sweden, are much puzzled how to manage their money transactions, and must bestow a considerable portion of time and attention upon them, before they can feel themselves at ease on the subject. One general rule is to procure as many small notes as possible, because it often happens that a stranger is under the necessity of giving a dollar instead of the sixth part of one, in case he has no change to pay the little demands that incessantly occur in travelling. The Swedish and Danish dollar were formerly of the same value, or very nearly so, but at present the Danish rix-dollar is only worth two shillings and twopence sterling, while the Swedish rix-dollar is valued at three shillings. The Danish dollar consists of forty-eight stivers or ninety-six skillings Danish ; the Swedish of forty-eight skillings Swedish. But in both countries the stivers and skillings have almost wholly disappeared, and will, probably, a few years hence, be no more than imaginary coins.



In 1804 there was no scarcity of specie in Denmark, but at present not a stiver or coin of any kind can be procured without much difficulty, and in Sweden none at all.

---

#### LETTER XIV.

*Engelholm, two stages north of Helsingborg,  
Jan. 14, 1809.*

I ARRIVED here from Helsingborg some hours ago, and during my progress was much surprised and gratified, to find that travelling in Sweden is by no means so irksome and unpleasant as in many other parts of Europe. The horses are hardy, fleet, and accustomed to quick driving; the peasants are good-natured, and extremely desirous to please: they never grumble or complain at the smallness of the drink-money they receive, nor use any discontented or insulting expressions. The roads are excellent, and the distances accurately measured. As far as regards the expence of horses, travelling in Sweden is not above one-third of what it is in Britain; but a journey of one hundred miles, or any given distance exceeding fifty or sixty miles, which can be managed in one day, will cost, perhaps, one half of what it does in England, and that too with not one-tenth of the comfort. Horses are supplied by the peasants at a fixed price per mile, according to the regulations of a royal edict; and the traveller may take his choice of being forwarded in a common four-wheeled cart, like those of Denmark, or of using his own carriage, at the risk of being obliged to take an additional horse or two, according to circumstances, or, perhaps, of having his carriage now and then overset in the steep ascents and declivities of the roads. Although the roads are very good, and well repaired, they are frequently very steep; and the small Swedish horses, not accustomed, and indeed not able, to back heavy carriages, gallop down such declivities at full speed, and often pay with their lives for the disproportion between their strength and the task imposed upon them. In good weather a light calash is the best sort of carriage.

Several hours before the traveller leaves his quarters, and, if convenient, the preceding night, an avant-courier, here called *forbod*, must be dispatched, who is to intimate at the different

MACDONALD]. M

stage-houses, on the road which he is to take, the hour of his employer's proposed arrival, the number of horses he requires, &c. A servant of that stage-house then goes to the peasant whose turn it is to furnish horses for that day, and comes himself, or sends one of his people, to accompany and fetch back horses. This stage-house man is called a *hall-karl*, pronounced *hoal-karl*, who must be paid for his trouble as well as the *forbod*. The peasant, or his servant, will expect a trifle also; but they do not grumble though they get nothing. It is, indeed, easy to satisfy them all; and I would rather pay a dozen of them than one Prussian or Saxon postillion.

The furnishing of horses is a heavy burden upon the Swedish peasantry, especially in summer and autumn, the only seasons in which they can carry on their field or agricultural operations. The poor creatures are sometimes obliged to leave their corn or their plough, and travel with their horses perhaps ten or twelve English miles before getting to the stage whence they are to carry the traveller: they then go twelve or fourteen miles of a stage, and generally at full speed; sometimes their horses are killed, and they obtain no redress nor payment; and after all this they must return home, a distance of perhaps twenty or twenty-two miles. These forty or forty-four miles they frequently travel for four or five shillings sterling, not more than one-fourth or fifth part of what they would ask if the fares were not regulated by express statute.

The horse-hire for the Swedish mile of thirty-six thousand feet, or nearly seven English miles, is twenty-five pence sterling per horse, or sixpence farthing for nine thousand feet, or one mile three quarters English. There are no tolls nor turnpike-gates, except where pontage is paid for bridges that have been attended with considerable expence.

On approaching this town, I was struck with the solidity and elegance of the bridge over the river, by which I came into the place, and asked some questions concerning it. All I could learn was, that it was lately built by a foreigner.

On getting into the inn in which I now write, I accosted a genteelly-dressed young man, whom I found in the best room, thinking him to be the landlord, and asked him how Engelholm chanced to have a bridge built with all the strength of a Scottish bridge? "No wonder," answered he, in the Forfarshire dialect, and with eyes sparkling with pleasure, "for I, Blackwood, from Angus-shire, in Scotland, built it; and I reckon it, without exception, the best bridge in Sweden."

This was the sixth Scotchman I had already met with in Sweden, which led one of my travelling companions, an Englishman, to make some remarks on the industry and sagacity of a nation, the natives of which, in every country in the world, and even in poor Sweden, distinguish themselves by a peculiar felicity in making fortunes, and rising to places of eminence and power.

Here too I find a *rara avis in terris*, an innkeeper's daughter with beauty, sense, and modesty.

The village is small, not containing above five or six thousand souls, but its situation is beautiful, and in summer must be in the highest degree delicious.

The soil between this place and Helsingborg is poor and sandy, as far as I can judge from the few spots which the strong winds have bared of snow. The peasants' houses are small and paltry, built of wood, unskilfully constructed, imperfectly finished, and by no means equal to those of the peasants through the greater part of the Danish dominions. Agriculture, excepting on two or three farms, occupied by persons who adopt our system, is in the rudest and most imperfect state imaginable. The woods are chiefly copse, the larger trees having been cut down and removed, and none being planted in their places. Plantations of trees are a rare phenomenon in Sweden. I must, however, confess, that by all accounts this district is one of the most barren and worst cultivated in the kingdom; and, therefore, my remarks, which refer almost exclusively to what I myself see, must not be reckoned generally applicable to the country, or even to the greater part of its agricultural provinces.

Whoever travels on this road, and indeed, as I am informed, over all the kingdom, would do wisely to store his carriage well with meat and drink, because almost all the houses are wretched hovels, sometimes lying alone, and totally sequestered from the rest of the neighbourhood, and can afford him neither food, wine, nor bed.

Our countrymen, especially such as come unfledged from England, and have only travelled in that luxurious country, are apt to be improvident in this respect. They also inveigh against the stupidity and barbarism of the poor people into whose houses they enter on the road, because they have not every conveniency and accomodation ready at a call; forgetting that in those houses the foreign traveller never expects to find any thing, and therefore calls for nothing; and that it is as unreasonable to look for the activity and address of an English or French waiter in a Swedish stage-house, as it

would be to hope to find the simplicity and innocence of the Swedish peasant in Covent-garden or the Palais Royal.

I saw to-day a striking instance of this tendency in my countrymen. On arriving at the miserable stage-house betwixt this place and Helsingborg, one of our English party called for a glass of water. A mild-looking, handsome girl brought him a wine glass empty. He raised his voice in apparent anger, and told her to fetch him a glass full of water. The young woman, wishing to oblige, but not understanding any more of his meaning than the word *glass*, went out of the room, and, after a considerable delay, brought him a tumbler full of Swedish brandy. The colour was the same with that of water. I shall never forget the frightful grimaces which he made on swallowing the first drop of this horrible beverage. In the utmost fury and horror, like a man convinced of being poisoned, he dashed the glass and brandy against the ground, and with an oath equally ludicrous and earnest, swore that the Swedes were the greatest savages, and the most incorrigible brutes in nature. I called back the girl, who had left us in dismay. "Pray," said I to her, in my broken Swedish, "fetch me a large glass full of water," pronouncing the word *watten* distinctly, and adding *drickes-watten* (drinking-water), to prevent mistake. She flew like lightning to get it; but before she could present it to us, she had the trouble of melting the ice, into which the contents of the bucket, just brought from a distant well, had by this time been converted; and this delay gave new cause of reproach and triumph to my English companion.

The water, however, came at last; and the girl made many apologies for not having at first understood my companion's meaning, and also for having brought the brandy, the only drink, as she said, which was ever called for in their house; and she concluded by *apologizing to us for the extreme frost, and uncomfortableness of a Swedish winter*. This last was not expected by either of us; and being delivered in good Swedish, with great sweetness, and with somewhat of a melancholy cadence, it sensibly affected my Englishman.

He gave her a crown; but it was not accepted without much importunity on his part, and many expressions of lively gratitude on that of the young woman. They would soon have become attached to each other, had circumstances permitted it: so different are the impressions which different persons make upon us, according to the situations in which they may be exhibited to our view.



Wooden shoes, similar to those which I saw in North Jutland, are common here. The people maintain that they are warm and dry, &c. but my opinion of them remains unchanged. They are so very heavy and unwieldy, that no reasoning can reconcile an unbiassed stranger to the use of them.

---

## LETTER XV.

*Gothenburgh, Götheborg (pronounced by the Swedes, Yæteborgh), Feb. 22d, 1809.*

I HAVE now spent nearly six weeks in Sweden, and travelled about one hundred and fifty miles through the country, so that, with the knowledge I had of it some years ago, I am in a state to give an idea of its general situation. My remarks shall be confined, as usual, chiefly to what came under my own personal observation.

Between Gothenburgh and Helsingborg, a distance of twenty-two miles and an half, Swedish, or nearly one hundred and forty-five English miles, there are only six places which have the smallest claim to the appellation of towns, and three of these, viz. Engelholm, Laholm, and Falkenberg, are mere villages, although they enjoy the privileges of towns; the other three, Halmstadt, Warberg, and Kongsbacka, are more populous, but I do not believe that the whole six contain 10,000 inhabitants.

The country from Helsingborg appeared to me poor, sandy, and meanly cultivated, with the exception of a few farms, on which, as I have already remarked, the Scotch farming system has been recently introduced.

Draining is much needed, but is almost universally neglected. The vast numbers of granite blocks which lie scattered over the fields in all directions, and which are in some places of immense size, present very serious obstacles to agricultural improvements, both by obstructing the run of water, and by preventing the regular ploughing of the fields.

Enclosures are rarely met with, and the few which I have seen, would scarcely keep out a pig.

The peasants' houses are all built of wood, and are frequently destroyed by accidental fires. I asked the peasants as I came along, why they still persevered in building their walls of such frail and precarious materials as fir deals, which so readily take fire, when they had abundance of rough granite at hand, ready for building houses which would last for ages, and effectually secure them against the effects of confa-



gration? The answer was uniform from every individual: "We do as has always been done; and besides, wooden houses are more expeditiously built, are cheaper, warmer, and infinitely handsomer than houses whose walls are vile stone."

It is vain to argue against such *conclusive* logic, or to suggest the example and experience of other northern countries. The answer is always ready, and is always given with all the modest self-sufficiency of vulgar prejudice, viz. "that may do very well in your country, sir, but we know better than strangers what suits Sweden, and our forefathers did not want common sense."

On entering a peasant's house, the traveller is pleased with the neatness and cleanliness of the pewter, and hardware utensils, which he sees displayed in a conspicuous part of the family room.

He sees also five or six, or perhaps ten or twelve mirrors, in different stations in the house.

Both Danes and Swedes have a peculiar delight in this kind of furniture. The next object of attention is the family bread, consisting of thin cakes, like the oaten cakes of Scotland, and some northern English and Irish counties. These cakes are of various diameters, from ten to twenty inches, and are perforated in the middle, and suspended from the roof in rows along the sides of the ceiling, by ropes or willow twigs run through the perforation in their centre.

These cakes are hard and tough, of a dark brown colour, composed of two-thirds rye, and one-third oats, or sometimes, in the better provinces, one-third wheat, and are baked only *once* a year.

An Englishman is seldom able to swallow this kind of bread; but I myself have found no inconvenience from it, further than the severe labour to which it condemns the teeth. It is certainly very convenient for labouring people to have their bread always ready for use, instead of being obliged to bake once or twice a-day for their families, as in the Highlands and Isles of Scotland, and in the west of Ireland.

Young children, from the age of one to that of eighteen months, are wrapped up in bandages, like cylindrical wicker baskets, which are contrived so as to keep their bodies straight, without interfering much with their growth.

They are suspended from pegs in the wall, or laid in any convenient part of the room, without much nicety, where they exist in great silence, and good humour. I have not heard the cries of a child since I came to Sweden. How different from the horrible squalling, so often the annoyance of Scottish inns!

Young women, and married and old women, use the same sort of dress, both for the head and person. This gives the former a strange look.

The women may, in general, be called handsome, though they are rather lean, and their bosoms rarely display that charming luxuriance which is so conspicuous in their sex, in Germany and France. The aid which dress might afford to the churlishness of nature in this respect, seems to be overlooked by almost all classes, especially in the early period of life.

Every girl of the lower order, wears a white, or sometimes a coloured handkerchief round her neck and about her head: one triangular flap of which hangs down behind her shoulders. They have fine hair, commonly brown or flaxen, rarely black, and very seldom red; long eye-lashes, beautifully-arched eye-brows, and an expression of sweetness and innocence. Their accent in speaking, is melancholy in the highest degree, and approaches to the singing cadence of the Highlanders of Argyleshire, in Scotland. Indeed they resemble, in many respects, the females of the finer Scottish counties.

Ladies of wealth and rank, dress pretty much in the French and English style. I think, however, that both gentlemen and ladies, of the higher orders, affect the French language, dress, and manners, more than they do the English; and that the imitation of the latter is exclusively adopted by the mercantile classes.

Were I to form a judgment from the little experience which I have had, concerning the relative characters of the different ranks, I should be apt to invert the order commonly received in society, and to prefer the lower to the higher; the merchant to the nobleman, and the peasant to the merchant. This preference, it is true, is entirely confined to what some men would call the negative worth or morality of the parties; their freedom from the vices and follies to which they have little temptation and access.

One thing, however, is certain, that while the powerful, rich, and commercial portions of the Swedish population are not particularly distinguished above the neighbouring nations, for uprightness, or honesty, the peasants are universally allowed to be the most innocent and harmless in Europe.

In most parts of the country, the houses have no locks to their doors, which stand open day and night, in summer and autumn, and when the weather admits of it; a sure proof that theft and violence are uncommon or unknown.

There is a general deficiency of education among them.

Scarcely any of the peasants who fetched us horses, and very few of the landlords of stage-houses can write, or even read. This arises from the scarcity and the bad establishment of schools throughout the country. In this respect, they are far behind their neighbours, the Danes and Germans, though infinitely before their other neighbours the Russians.

Men of whom one would expect that their success in life must essentially depend upon their education, such as officers in the army, navy, landed proprietors, and young sons of noble families, are also miserably deficient in those branches of knowledge to which in the aggregate we commonly give the title of liberal education.

They sometimes speak a foreign language, or two, and with this literary accomplishment they remain satisfied. Neither history, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, geography, ancient or modern classical literature, nor indeed, as far as I have learned, any specific course or extent of instruction, are reckoned indispensable to the character of a gentleman. In these, I find the ladies, generally speaking, greater adepts than their husbands or brothers, as they are also in every thing connected with the accommodations and embellishments of polished life.

There is a great deal of the disposition among them, which disgraced Scotland during the reign of the Stuarts, before her union with England; I mean a sour spirit of disloyalty, pride, and discontent; of venality and faction, among the higher orders, and of indifference, or despair, among the peasantry.

The mercantile classes do not much care for this or for any country; or if they have any partiality, it is for France. This bias is not universal, but I find it pretty general.

[Our author then extends his remarks to the social and commercial intercourse of the Swedes and Danes. In his observations respecting the former, we find no facts beyond what we have already been enabled to communicate in the excellent works of sir John Carr and Kuttner. To his commercial remarks, he has added a Table, exhibiting the whole exports of Gottenburgh for the last hundred years. He conceives that it is the mutual interest of Sweden and Great Britain to be friends, and that Denmark will, as soon as she is permitted by France, be glad to renew with us her ancient intercourse, and forget all past causes of irritation.]











